

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, July 25, 2013

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Cabbies in row over delays to car checks

DISGRUNTLED taxi drivers will meet council bosses to discuss concerns amid a row over vehicle tests.

Cabbies have complained about delays when vehicles are taken in for tests at Dudley Council's garage.

They claim the Lister Road depot does not have the capacity to handle the roadworthiness checks for the borough's hundreds of licensed vehicles.

Drivers say their cars can be off the road for days while they wait to be tested causing them to lose money.

Council transport boss Khurshid Ahmed said he would listen to them.

Shaz Saleem, chairman of Dudley Private Hire and Taxi Association, said: "I've heard of four drivers – one from Brierley Hill, two from Stourbridge and one from Halesowen – who have been off the road for three or four days waiting for re-tests because Lister Road couldn't fit them in."

Nasir Hussain, manager of Stourbridge-based Falcon Taxis, said two small faults failed one driver's car on a Wednesday at 7.30am.

"He got it fixed by 12pm but the bus Lister Road depot could not fit in a re-test until Monday afternoon, so the driver is losing five days of fares" he said.

Councillor Ahmed said: "We are aware of the concerns raised by the taxi drivers and will be discussing the issues with them as soon as possible."

Snow leopard cub dies at zoo

THE newly-born snow leopard cub at Dudley Zoo has died at just 11 weeks old.

Nidara was the offspring of mother, four-year-old Nanga, and father, three-year-old Margaa. It was the first leopard to be born at the attraction in 12 years.

Zoo spokesman Jill Hitchman said: "The 11-week-old cub died in the presence of zoo staff and the zoo vet. "There had been no previous indication there was anything wrong with the youngster and we are currently awaiting the vet's report."

AN ELECTED board governor at the under-fire Russells Hall Hospital has called for more power as the hospital bids to bounce back from a critical Government report.

Dudley councillor and hospital governor Steve Walther admits he is "deeply concerned" by some of the failings uncovered in the report, but says he is backing chief executive Paula Clark to lead the hospital trust forward.

NHS medical director Professor Sir Bruce Keogh raised concerns over staffing levels, communication, complaints handling and safety checking at the hospital – but spared it being placed in special measures, unlike

11 other hospitals. Councillor Walther said: "We were very concerned the hospital was one of the 14 to be investigated for death mortality rates – but they pleased it has not been placed in special measures.

However, there are areas of concern which need improving and we, the board of governors, will be playing a part scrutinising the work of the board of directors to ensure the improvements are made."

He added: "We have the power to hold the board to account, but this is limited – I personally, would like to see more power for the governors. But it is a balancing act as too much power results in responsibility and at

the end of the day we are only volunteers, not medical experts."

Miss Clark was forced to defend herself in the face of calls by former elected board governors Bill Etheridge and Major Robbins for her to step down following the report.

Opinion

Mr Etheridge, who resigned from the board earlier this year in a protest on parking charges, said: "When it's not working, let's be honest with each other, it's time to change things."

But Miss Clark, who welcomed the report, said: "No, I'm not stepping down. Bill is

entitled to his opinion but I'm very heartened by the fact that the regulator Monitor say they are happy with the leadership of the hospital, confident that this is the right leadership to take the hospital forward. I'm here to carry on the improvement journey we have already started and I believe we have the right people here to do the job for the people of Dudley."

Ms Clark said the management system would be looked at. She said: "We will take our time to look at the review report in full and we will discuss that with the governors."

● Pledge – Page 5

Ex-church could be used for a mosque

A FORMER Methodist church could be transformed into a mosque and community centre under new plans.

The Old Hill Masjid and Community Group has applied to Sandwell Council to change the use of the building in Halesowen Road.

The group said it current base in Highgate Road is no longer big enough.

A Facebook group in favour of the plan states they are trying to raise £350,000 to undertake the extensive refurbishments needed to convert the premises into a mosque.

The building was formerly a Methodist church but has also been used as a martial arts centre and for other commercial uses. It is now virtually derelict and considered an eyesore by residents.

The work would see the Victorian building extensively refurbished including the restoration of features and a conversion to incorporate a main prayer hall, ancillary spaces, community and teaching facilities.

The plans includes car parking and landscaping.

Old Hill Councillor Julie Webb said the building was currently like a pigeon loft.

"It is virtually derelict," she said. "The group has proposed to take it on as its new base. The current centre is very small, just a small house really and there are issues with parking particularly at prayer time."

Tribute made for Christina

A MEMORIAL garden featuring purple flowers blossoming throughout the year will be unveiled in tribute to Halesowen student Christina Edkins at her former primary school.

St Edmund's Catholic, Ladywood, Birmingham, will begin work this summer.

The 16-year-old was stabbed to death while on a bus on her way to Leasowes High School. A man accused of killing her will appear at Birmingham Crown Court on September 6.

TESCO TARGETS LOCAL JOBLESS

AROUND 500 out-of-work residents across Dudley borough have been invited to apply for jobs during the first recruitment drive for a new multi-million pound Tesco supermarket.

Bosses at the retail giant are initially offering up to 800 jobs at the new supermarket being built as part of the Stourbridge's Crown Centre.

by Andrew Turton

days for the jobseekers. Regeneration boss, Councillor Judy Foster, said the recruitment drives comes as building work on the Crown Centre gathers pace.

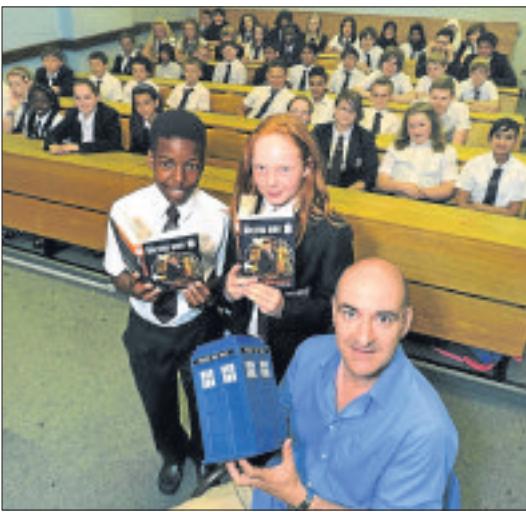
The major redevelopment of Stourbridge is now at an advanced stage and it is a very exciting time for the town," she said.

"A combination of part-time and full-time jobs will be available and we're committed to ensuring local people benefit."

Tesco's corporate affairs manager, Simon Petar, added: "We are delighted that our partnership with Dudley Council and the local JobCentre Plus is going from strength to strength."

Following the phase one of the recruitment, Tesco will open the process to everyone through an online campaign from early September.

Students meet man behind the Daleks



Voice of the Daleks and author Nicholas Briggs with Lydia Washington-Downing, aged 12, 13-year-old Sheriff Shakoane and other students

THE man behind the voice of Dr Who's greatest enemies has visited a school in Cradley Heath to help students with their writing.

The Daleks and Cyberman maybe the Doctor's greatest foes, but Nicholas Briggs, the man behind their iconic voices, had a day off from trying to take over the universe to speak and take answers from excited pupils at Ormiston Forge Academy, Wright's Lane.

The actor and author said he had always been fan of the series and remembered growing up with his favourite Doctor, Patrick Troughton.

"When we first started working on the series with Christopher Eccleston we had no idea how successful it would end up being it's been really amazing," he said.

Impressed

Nicholas has also written a number of scripts and books for Doctor Who and used his literary expertise to judge the school's short story competition and handed out the prizes to the best entries.

The father-of-one from Yorkshire added: "I was very impressed with the quality of the stories. It really goes to show how clever the children are at this academy."

"I think it's very important for children to get involved and reading and writing."

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School rewarded for branching out

A Halesowen school has clinched a top award after branching out into forestry.

Lutley Primary has won silver in the 2013 education category in the Royal Forestry Society's Excellence in Forestry awards after beating schools in an area ranging from Worcestershire to Cumbria.

The award of £500, a trophy and an oak tree was presented to pupils

and staff by vice president elect of the society, Sophie Churchill.

Lutley forest school leader Liz Cole said: "Our sessions are great fun whilst giving children the important opportunity to regularly visit and connect with the natural environment, learning and growing together.

"We always ensure children are involved in all our grounds projects,

which has included the planting of around 250 trees, both at the school site and our local park.

"This participation helps us all really appreciate the impact we can have on our environment."

Positive

Judges, Royal Forestry Society education officer Debbie Cotton and Forestry Commission England's

Richard Pain, praised the school, saying: "Lutley are making great use of every corner of their small site to provide positive hands on outdoor learning experiences."

"We were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and confidence of the children. They just got stuck in."

"They had real ownership of their site, were confident and happy and clearly very at home outdoors."

Pupils join together for clothes aid

THE Mayor of Dudley met students from two schools working together to help children and families in the West African country of Gambia.

Councillor Alan Finch saw pupils from Ridgewood High, Stourbridge, and Peter's Hill Primary, Brierley Hill, during a handover of old uniforms from the primary school.

Peter's Hill pupils are updating their uniform and their uniform supplier, Uniformity, suggested they collect old uniforms to donate to Ridgewood's Project Gambia.

James Ndomahina and Donald Greyhound, from Gambia's Newlife Children's Centre, which runs two schools, were at Peter's Hill to receive the clothes.

Councillor Finch said: "It was great to meet the pupils taking part and also James and Donald from Newlife.

"The schools from our borough are having a great impact in schools from a very poor area of Gambia."

Parliament has a jolly good beer

AN ale brewed in the Black Country is being served in Parliament's Strangers' Bar.

Crispin's Ommer, produced by the Fowles Brewing Company, Upper Gornal, has been drafted in as a guest ale at the request of the Dudley North MP Ian Austin.

To celebrate the achievement he shared a pint with brewer James Fowles.

Mr Austin said: "The Black Country is home to the country's best ales and Fowles' beers were no exception when I tried them earlier this year.

"James and Tom Fowles have done a great job setting up the brewery.

"I want to help support local businesses like theirs so I'm delighted that MPs from across the country will now have the chance to sample our award-winning local brews."

Fowles Brewery is based at the Jolly Crispin pub, Clarence Street.

Gardening show

SEDGLEY Gardening Club will hold its flower show at Sedgley Community Centre Ladies Walk, on August 17 from 12.30pm. There are flower, vegetable classes, jam, cake and honey classes. There will be a brass band and cream teas.

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Childhood memories fuel model collection

COLLECTING rare cars has been a labour of love for Martyn Brown.

The 67-year-old had been collecting the mini models on and off since he was a child but it was not until he sold his last one about 10 years ago that he was inspired to start collecting in earnest again.

Mr Brown, of Hagley, said: "In the mid-1950s when I was a child they were the first gifts I had as a Christmas present and I've always remembered them. Just before I retired I only had one left and I sold it. But I lived to regret it."

So for the past decade, with renewed interest, Mr Brown has collected dozens of the mini tinplate speed and racing cars - the smallest being just under four inches and the largest about 18 inches.

When Mr Brown was growing up, collectors would have to rely on someone selling one of the cars to a local shop or at auction but now, with ready access to the internet, he has discovered most of the cars he loves are available - albeit at a price.

Clockwork

And when Mr Brown was a child, the cars were still well out of the financial reach of many families.

While his rare chrome variation model by German firm Guntherman was 16 shillings and sixpence in the 1930s, a man's wage at the time would have been under £3 a week, he said.

He added: "Only the most well off children would have them and when I was a child it would have taken me weeks to save up enough for a decent car."

"Most of the toys were clockwork, produced in bright colours and any child of the period would have loved to have owned them."

There is even a Black Country link to the production of the racing cars, with Sunbeam of Wolverhampton making a land speed car known as The Slug which became the first car to travel faster than 200mph and set a new land speed record.

It wasn't long before this 1927 history-making event was recreated in toy form.

Mr Brown, who owned Martyn Brown Antiques in Birmingham and



Martyn Brown with some of his collection of tinplate cars



A 1930s' Silver Bullet from Germany



Models of Bluebirds driven by Sir Malcolm Campbell during his land speed record runs in the 1920s

Halesowen for about 40 years before retiring, focuses on cars from 1920 until 1950 and he spends a lot of time scouring the internet for any that he might like to collect and has now amassed over 100.

The cheaper versions can go for £70 or £80 but the more pricey models can fetch many hundreds of pounds. "You'll probably wonder why old folks like me are so interested in them, but it's about the

memories, I guess, and things that aren't going to come again," he said.

"They are being made but not with the same quality."

His current search is for a 1950s boxed Scalex racing car and the large CLJ P2 Alfa racing car and can be contacted on 07976 252 703 by anyone who might have any to sell.

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Gun-claim robber sent to prison



Mark Rutter – died aged 39

A MAN who walked into a kebab shop and told staff he had a gun as he demanded cash has been jailed.

Paul Summers, aged 40, of Woodcroft Close, Cradley Heath, tried to get the money from workers at Charlie's Kebab House, Bromsgrove on April 14.

After admitting to attempted robbery when he appeared at Worcester Crown Court, Summers was jailed for 20 months.

Jamie Gillard, 32, of Swan Street, Dudley, denied attempted robbery, but admitted aggravated vehicle-taking, drink-driving and driving without insurance.

The court accepted his plea and he was jailed for 14 months and banned from driving for two years.

No firearm was found when police arrested the pair.

Parking ban near school permanent

TEMPORARY parking rules to stop parents clogging up roads around a Halesowen school during mornings and afternoons have been made permanent.

People were banned from stopping their vehicle on one side of two roads near Lutley Primary School under the trial introduced last year.

The move was made permanent this month after a failed plan for a car park and repeated complaints from parents angry about the parents' car parking.

Dudley Council Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for transport, made the decision after consulting with ward councillors on the issue.

Ward Councillor for Hayley Green, Hazel Turner, said the experiment had been a success.

Staff moving to make savings

AROUND 40 Dudley Council staff were moving to new offices this week – the first of 400 workers being relocated to cut costs.

The private sector housing team will be the first to move to Harbour Buildings, at Brierley Hill's Waterfront complex. They are leaving their long-term base in St James's Road, Dudley.

Council chiefs said moving staff from six sites moving to the complex, will save £150,000 per year.

Brave father loses 15-year leukaemia fight

A BRAVE father who had battled against leukaemia for 15 years – beating it twice – has died just 10 days after celebrating his 40th birthday.

Sporty Mark Rutter, who played football and cricket and enjoyed taking his two young sons to Aston Villa matches, was described by his grieving father, Graham, as 'my best friend'.

Mark, from Kingswinford, discovered he had leukaemia only when he broke his ribs while playing football for Enville Athletic and a blood test showed he had the illness in 1998.

He responded to treatment and, after making a full recovery, married his wife Kate, described as

'the love of his life', in 1999. But, three years later, leukaemia struck again – and once more he recovered after a course of intense chemotherapy.

The treatment left him with heart problems but he kept living life to the full, taking his sons Harvey, aged 12, and eight-year-old Niall to Aston Villa matches.

He played cricket for Clent, near Stourbridge, and coached Harvey at Swindon Cricket Club, helping the youngster to become good enough to play for Worcestershire's Under 12 team.

Mark, of Broad Street, Kingswinford, also raised money for the Georgina Cancer Unit at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital, where he was

treated, and was chairman of the Kingswinford Lions Villa supporters' group.

But the family was dealt a crushing blow when he was told in March that his leukaemia had returned for the third time.

Once more he put up a fight – but he died on July 9 in Russells Hall Hospital.

Graham Rutter, aged 60, of Cherry Grove, Norton, Stourbridge, said: "He was not just my son – he was my best friend."

His funeral was on Monday at St Mary's Church, Oldswinford, Stourbridge. He requested that all Villa fans wear their club ties or any sports club tie.

Borough GP services need more investment – doctor

INCREASED workloads combined with fewer GPs in Dudley borough could eventually push them to the limit and threaten patient care, a senior doctor has warned.

Dr Jas Rathore is calling for more investment in GP services across the borough. The doctor, who has run a practice in Dudley for 20 years, fears the expected retirement of a fifth of GPs in the borough in the next 10 years, along with an increased workload as health bosses attempt to shift patients from hospitals to surgeries, could cause problems in the future.

Dr Rathore, who is also clinical executive for the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), has called on NHS England to plough more investment into recruiting new GPs and updating ageing practices.

"There is no danger or risk to the patient at this present moment, my concern is in the coming years if there is no change and we have a downward trend on the numbers of doctors and not the investment," he said.

"I fear it could head us to a stage where the working levels of GPs are unsafe, where they are seeing too many patients in the day and they are functioning with stress, which would impact their work."

In a report to Dudley Council's health scrutiny committee meeting, Dr Rathore said there were 40 GPs in the Dudley borough, with almost 200 doctors.

However, 27 per cent of those are aged above 54 and 10 per cent above 64. Dr Rathore believes 20 per

cent of the doctors will retire within the next 10 years.

He is already feeling an increase in patient demand at his surgery, which currently has four doctors, from just five years ago.

"Doctors work an average of two-and-a-half hours surgery in the morning, followed by three home visits and three hours surgery in the afternoon," he said. "I'm concerned doctors will be asked to squeeze more hours in the day than possible."

As part of the report, Dr Rathore is calling for greater funding from NHS England.

He is also proposing functions, such as payroll, be linked between smaller practices to help them cope.

CCG spokeswoman Laura Broster said its member GPs were a priority.

"The CCG does not commission primary care services but the focus of the strategy is on developing local primary care and supporting practices to provide high quality services for patients," she said.

Top brass herald restored bandstand



David Sparks, Val Wellings, Kynne Homer-Davies and Sue Lee with friends and staff at the back at the bandstand

A BANDSTAND which has been the centrepiece of Quarry Bank Park for more than 80 years has been restored to its former glory.

Friends of the Park received a £18,000 grant to carry out work to replace the cast iron panels and gates.

The completion of the project means the bandstand is ready to host concerts and an event is due to take place on August 11.

It has been described as one of the finest examples of bandstands in the region and was built in 1925.

Val Wellings, member of the friends, said: "The park plays a very important part in the life of the local community and is very well used by people of all

ages. The bandstand is located in the centre of the park and is on view to all visitors so we are delighted to see it restored to how it used to be."

Councillor David Sparks, chairman of the friends and leader of Dudley Council, said: "The volunteers on the Friends of the Park have worked extremely hard to secure the funding for this excellent restoration to take place."

"The bandstand has been recognised in the past as one of the finest examples of a bandstand in the region and this is the perfect example of our Love Your Community campaign being put into action."

The friends group worked in part-

nership with Dudley Council's parks development team to secure the funding for the work from landfill tax charity Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust.

Contractors Express Valve Manufacturing, of Thornleigh Trading estate, Dudley carried out the work. The family-run foundry completed the refurbishment using only materials sourced and made in the Black Country.

The park attracts around 1,500 people each week and also features a multi-use games area, football pitch, skatepark, children's play area, a tennis court and a court used for cricket.

NEWS

in brief

Driver passes out at wheel of his bus

A DRIVER passed out at the wheel of a packed double decker bus which mounted the pavement in Stourbridge. Passengers went to his aid on the 246 bus journeying from Dudley through Amblecote on Thursday at 5pm.

They said the driver slumped at the wheel as he drove down the A491 near the Platt Crescent and Bretell Lane crossroads. The bus mounted the kerb but this jolted the driver who braked and avoided hitting any collision.

Paramedics checked the driver who did not require hospital treatment. National Express West Midlands spokesman Jack Kelly said: "We are investigating the cause."

Taking guard for charity match

CRICKETERS from Halesowen will take on members of the Royal Navy in a charity match this Sunday.

The annual event will be held at Halesowen Cricket Club, Grange Road. A barbecue, bouncy castle and raffle will take place throughout the day and there will be a zumba bath at 11.30am. The match begins at 1.30pm.

All money raised from the event will go to the Paul McCann Fund for Needy Children. For more information call the club on 0121 550 2744.

Worker suffers electric shock

A WORKER was taken to hospital after suffering an electric shock at a manufacturing company in Halesowen.

He had been testing newly-made welding products at Kuka Systems, Hereward Rise, at 7am on Saturday. He was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Sales director Nick Edge said the man had made a full recovery and was back in work.

Blaze breaks out in hotel bathroom

A HOTEL was evacuated after a faulty extractor fan caught fire in an en-suite bathroom. Fire crews were called to the Kingsfisher Hotel, Kidderminster Road, Wall Heath, at around 9.45am on Tuesday.

Only two guests were at the hotel. They gathered outside the building along with members of staff as a precaution while the blaze was extinguished.

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NEWS

THE BEST
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RHODES

MY RECENT thread on odd married names (Hope Pope, Eva Weaver, etc) reminds a reader that some men are born with curious names. He says he can never hear the BBC reporter Phil McCann without thinking: "What – from here?" ☐

THE best CV is only as good as its weakest part. An employer tells me he was greatly impressed with one application for a café assistant until he read the bit about how the applicant had worked 'a variety of shifts including weekends' and unfortunately left out the F. ☐

QUESTION: What do you call an old lady who says: "Don't be so damn silly, girl, of course you shouldn't be riding." Answer: Your Majesty. ☐

A FRIEND is building a tiny extension and the local council invites all his neighbours to read the 17 documents involved in the planning application, and comment. I was particularly impressed with the bat inspector's report. It takes just over 2,500 words to tell us 'no bats here'. ☐

THE hosepipe bans cannot be far away. Will that be the spur this Government needs to make it drop the ludicrous HS2 train project (£42,000 million and rising every second) and build a UK water grid? Most rail and tram projects provide billion-pound contracts for foreign manufacturers. Creating a 21st century network of canals, aqueducts, irrigation trenches and fountains would ensure there is water for all while creating British jobs for British workers.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes
every Monday to Friday in
your Express & Star**

Splashing time as club reaches 50th birthday

HALESOWEN Swimming Club celebrates its 50th.

The club, which is based at Halesowen Leisure Centre, was dreamed up by members of the community in May 1963.

On July 26 of that same year, it held its first swimming night and queues stretched from the local pool down to the town centre.

To reduce numbers, volunteers measured swimmers with a broom handle, excluding anyone who was deemed too short to swim in deep water.

Since then, the club has gone from strength to strength and has held more than 2,500 swim nights, with people aged five to 80 taking part in its sessions.

Huge

A number of swimmers from the club competed in the Olympic games of the 70s and 80s and more recently, the club secured the Worcester County Relay Championship title for the fourth time in six years.

Over the years it has played host to some of the best swimmers at county level and currently holds 12 senior and 10 junior championship titles. Chairman Duncan Edmonds said: "This is another huge landmark in the history of the club and all members past and present can take pride in our achievements over the last 50 years.

"A lot has changed in this time and the club has been well placed to become very professional in its operations. We can enjoy our recent suc-



Club secretary Jane Cuthbert, left, with former chairman and president John Bench, ex-chairmen Muriel Harper, John Holden and Margaret Edmonds and current chairman Duncan Edmonds

cesses but the challenge is for us to build on our achievements and become better still, while maintaining the family feel among the members."

More than 70 volunteers help run the club and in its 50 years, eight members have been honoured with

a life membership award.

The first was original club secretary, George Staniland in 1967 followed by Olympian Joy Mitchell in 1976 and former presidents Godfrey Harper and Marion Bench.

Former chairman John Bench and members Margaret Edmonds and

John Holden have also been awarded.

Jane Cuthbert has been secretary at the club for 10 years and Mr Edmonds is the club's longest-serving chairman, having been first elected 13 years ago.

MP will champion sports to fight fat

STOURBRIDGE MP Margot James has signed up to a sports campaign rising obesity rates.

She will help to champion the interests of local sport in Parliament and promote sport schemes in the area.

Ms James will also work with Black Country BeActive, which provides opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity.

It is one of 49 County Sports Partnerships in the country working to increase participation in sport.

She said that according to NHS figures 51,317 people are currently classed as obese in Dudley.

"At current rates, this figure could increase to 24.9 per cent of the adult population in Dudley by 2016," she said. T

"To tackle this, County Sports Partnerships is bringing together the governing bodies of sport, community clubs, schools, leisure facilities, local authorities and health commissioners with the aim of increasing participation in sport and activity.

"I am delighted to become a Parliamentary Sport Champion and offer my support to this important campaign.

"Obesity is a growing problem both nationally and locally."

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Charity plea to therapists

A DUDLEY cancer support group is appealing for volunteer therapists to treat patients and carers.

White House Cancer Support has 11 therapists who give people with cancer, and their carers, complementary therapy. Patients and their carers can receive up to 12 free sessions of therapy.

Any therapist able to volunteer should call Helen Lees, group and records officer for White House, on 01384 231232.

Article coup for childcare student

A HALESOWEN College student has had an article about how to make childcare affordable published in a specialist magazine. James Boddy, who is studying for a foundation degree in early years, is manager of a child-care centre.

The 25-year-old wants to make care more affordable and flexible. Course leader Angela Hodgkins said: "I am extremely proud of James."

New store will create 150 jobs

UP TO 150 jobs are being created at Merry Hill with the opening of The Range homeware shop on September 20. It is now recruiting for part-time and full-time jobs.

The Range sells value-priced products ranging from homeware, DIY and garden furniture to arts and crafts, sofas, beds and toys. The branch will be the chain's 77 store.

Patients group pledges to help improve Russells Hall

A NEWLY-FORMED health patients' group says it will play an important role in helping turn around Russells Hall Hospital.

It has been told to make urgent improvements in the wake of a critical Government report which found failings in staff levels and the complaints procedure.

by Alex Ross

Spokeswoman Melissa Guest said: "As local consumer champion for health and social care, it is clear Healthwatch Dudley has a very important role to play."

"In the coming months we will be listening to the experiences of patients, their families and carers, to ensure that their views are fully taken into account."

"We are committed to representing the views of local people and are pleased that we have been invited to work with Russells Hall Hospital, to support everyone on this challenging journey."

She added: "The hospital needs to make improvements, but it also needs to hear from its patients if it wants to succeed."

"The complaints procedure is one area the patients can have a direct involvement in helping to improve – they tell us what is right and wrong and we can pass that information on to the relevant people."

To contact the group call 03000 111 001.

Powers

The independent patients' group Healthwatch Dudley said it would be working with the hospital to help it meet the wanted standards.

The group is funded from central government to represent users of health and social care in Dudley on such boards as the borough's Health and Well Being Board.

It has powers to report unsolved issues to the Care Quality Commission and to Healthwatch England, a national patients' group.

Bully's hits goal for £3,000 baby boost



Steve Bull with ward sister Julie Taylor, radiologist Dr Kambiz Maleki, and consultant Dr Subramanian Mahadevan

A HOSPITAL charity raising money for premature and sick babies has received a major funding boost from England and Wales legend Steve Bull.

Steve strolled into Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley, to present a cheque for £3,000 to the charity for the hospital's neonatal unit.

The donation came following an appeal by his charity, the Steve Bull

Foundation, with the cash being raised at a golf day held at Worfield Golf Club.

The money will be used to buy a bilbed, which is used to treat babies with newborn jaundice.

Steve said: "I am delighted my charity has been able to support such a worthwhile cause, and thank you to everyone who attended our golf day whose generosity enabled us to buy the

much needed equipment."

Karen Phillips, charity fundraising manager, added: "We are so grateful to the Steve Bull Foundation for this generous donation which will purchase a bilbed for the Neonatal Unit."

"The phototherapy unit allows a baby suffering with jaundice to be treated in their own cot rather than being restricted to an incubator."

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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS

WORRYINGLY, for a second week running, I again find myself in agreement with a member of the political classes.

Dudley councillor Patrick Harley says he will lift all car parking charges if his party regains control at next year's elections. Of course the key word is 'if', and it is easy to make bold promises from the luxury of the opposition benches.

At least he has grasped the problem, which most other councillors in the West Midlands, seem unwilling to accept.

There is little point in spending millions of pounds on glossy new schemes to attract people into our towns if you are then going to make them feel unwelcome the moment they arrive. Whoever invented the 'pay and display' meter has a lot to answer for.

It is not just the cost, or even the inconvenience of being expected to carry a pocketful of small change around. More than that, it is the sheer officiousness of it all.

The pompous signs warning of dire penalties, the officials dressed like the Red Army poised with their sinister hand-held devices, waiting to pounce on anybody who dares to transgress.

If councils had any sense, they would be rolling out the red carpet for anybody choosing to spend money in our ailing town centres.

And realise that a pay-and-display meter on a publicly owned car park presents about as warm a welcome as a punch in the throat.

□□□□□□□□

LOVED the story about the mother and daughter who were turned away from a McDonald's drive-through because they arrived on horseback.

Undeterred, the mother took her beast into the seating area (the horse, not the daughter), where it left a rather unpleasant gratuity on the restaurant floor.

Why they were turned away is not explained. Smacks of a hate-crime to me, equinophobia or something. Still, they should be grateful it was MacDonald's, and not one of those dreadful, less reputable burger outlets.

They probably have thought it was a meat delivery.

□□□□□□□□

CONGRATULATIONS to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the birth of their new son. And as the nation shares in their joy, conversation turns to the choice of name.

Much has been made of the young Duchess's unremarkable, middle-class background, and the couple's ability to connect with modern Britain. Even so, a Prince Wayne or Keanu might still be a step to far.

Besides, celebrity names are all a bit old hat. If the happy couple want a name that truly reflects 21st century Britain, maybe it is time to consider a bit of corporate sponsorship.

HRH Prince of Cambridge, Brought To You In Association With J D Sports. Has a rather nice ring to it, don't you think?



Cradley Heath Baptist Church which has had extensive work



The restored steeple



The church's interior where the roof has been made secure

Helping glory return to Georgian church

Specialists were called in to fight the ravages of frost and wood rot, as **NAOMI DUNNING** found out

A £200,000 restoration project on an historic church has now been completed.

This first phase of the restoration work on Grade II-listed Cradley Heath Baptist Church saw specialist builders and stonemasons undertake the delicate project to restore the historic building.

The 180-year-old church in Corngraves Road was awarded a £97,000 grant from English Heritage to carry out the vital works.

Church bosses then worked hard to secure the rest of the funding through grants and fundraising projects to get the work done.

This first phase saw extensive work on the roof particularly on the west elevation and tower in a bid to make it water tight and secure.

Specialists

They also undertook extensive repointing and the original embedded iron reinforcements have been replaced with stainless steel supports.

The terracotta detailing on the building was also badly frost-damaged, and bosses at the church recruited specialists from Blackburn to restore and replace the damaged detailing.

The specialists recreated exact replicas of two large terracotta urns which are placed on a prominent site at the church.

Internally the floor on the south side had extensive wood rot, which had to be replaced.

Project manager Gordon Roberts says:



Project manager Gordon Roberts looks how the restoration of the Cradley Heath Baptist Church progressed

"We had to replace 20 square metres worth of flooring. The workman actually had to prop up the organ which weighed around two tonnes and work underneath."

"The floor damage was worse than expected so it cost us a bit more to get done."

The workmen also replaced the roof truss on the north side of the building.

Mr Roberts says: "All the high level repairs have now been completed so the

building is water tight. I started working on this in 2009, so it is fantastic to see this stage completed. I think the workman have done a brilliant job, and all the work and detailing is as true to the original as much as possible."

Selected

Church bosses applied to English Heritage for the grant in 2011 and initially received £15,000 to start the development work. Specialist teams of

architects and designers assessed the building, and worked out the best way to restore it so it will last for generations to come.

Heritage bosses said the Georgian church was selected because of its outstanding historical significance.

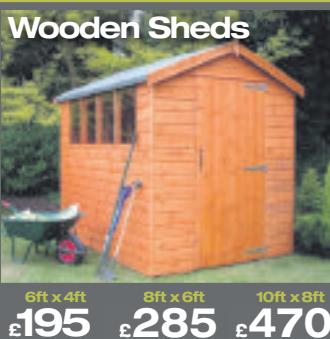
This is just the first phase of the work and Mr Roberts is now looking to fundraise for the second phase which will see the inside of the church restored and redecorated.

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THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A WOLVERHAMPTON teenager escaped with a gashed head after plunging more than 60ft down a Welsh mountainside. Stuart Edwards, from Tettenhall, tripped on loose rocks and fell down a sheer drop during a school trip.

FORMER champion motor cyclist Pip Harris won a bottle of champagne – and decided to build a boat to go with it. Mr Harris spent 10 years building the 40ft sailing yacht in the back garden of his Wombourne home.

PENSIONERS in Wolverhampton were given an offer of cut-price food – school meals at 22p. The scheme made use of surplus food from school kitchens, caused by drop in pupil numbers.

1993...

WOLVERHAMPTON'S longest-serving headmaster said goodbye to his pupils and staff when he retired from the Norrthcott School in Bushbury. Michael Davies, aged 63, had been head of the school for 24 years.

WALSALL-by-the-sea was the image being promoted by organisers of the town's annual illuminations – even though the nearest beach is 100 miles away. A package of sea-style entertainment was launched to persuade locals that they don't have to travel to the coast for bright lights and pier-type shows.

WOLVERHAMPTON pools collector Sean Sarsfield hit the jackpot himself – netting £210,000 from a £1.50 stake. The 41-year-old from Bushbury scooped top prize in a national spot-the-ball competition.

2003...

FOOTBALL fans in Wolverhampton faced a blackout after pubs switched off live football because of an increase in Sky Sports subscription charges. At least 12 pubs in the region decided not to show the new football season due to price increases of up to 22 per cent.

A PANTOMIME group from the Black Country raised money to help autistic children after performing a classic fairytale. The Stourbridge Pantomime Company performed Pinocchio to raise funds to build a residential unit at Sunfield School in Cleint.

A 75-YEAR-OLD former accountant from Tettenhall broke two British athletics records at the 15th World Masters Championships in Puerto Rico. Sprightly Alan Meddings proved that he's the fastest pensioner in the world by winning the 100m and 200m events.

LETTERS

Farmers' market needs your support

IN response to R.Blackwood's letter (July 11) I would like to add my own points about the twice monthly market in Halesowen. Firstly, I suspect that the Saturday they were talking about was actually the fifth one of the month when an additional market is allowed.

However, some farmers already have other commitments and are unable to attend, hence the fact there were only two stalls. There are more farmers on the second and fourth Saturdays.

Secondly, the market has, for several years, been a farmers' and craft market, with a limited number of general stalls permitted since last year,

as per the licence agreement. While some charity shops may stock some similar items, there are products in the market that cannot be found in these shops. Naturally, the quality of goods will vary, as they do in retail shops. Stallholders pride themselves on giving good, friendly service in all weathers.

Many of the town's retailers have openly stated they welcome the market, as it brings additional visitors those days, which increases their own sales. Market traders, in turn, spend money with retailers while they are there. But vital to all this, is the support of customers. Unfortunately,

the market has just lost the Snoggable Garlic stall due to poor sales, despite the excellent quality of their product.

So, a plea. If Halesowen residents of (which we are) wish to have a vibrant and varied market then traders need your support. Please come and take a look at our stalls, say hello and ask questions about what we sell, we are a friendly bunch!

Without our customers' support, not only will the farmers have gone but also the whole market altogether.

PAULINE SIMPSON AND TRISH WINDSOR
Cherry Tree Lane, Halesowen

The Heathens need backing from council

I COULD not agree more with the comments made by Mike Thompson, who, although living in our neighbouring borough, has the interests of Dudley to heart.

Our council continues to award nothing but failure and I agree with another writer, does little to deter the offenders of dog mess.

It is an absolute disgrace that despite many years of promises and millions of our pounds spent, we have so little regeneration. Even a 3,000-name petition supplied by me has not protected our medieval market place. Double yellow lines have increased and there is an absence of free parking in our run-down town. Our streets are littered with failed black bag collections.

One of the few successes was our beloved Heathens speedway. They bought people from all over the UK and have been treated with utter contempt. Land by the old Freightliner site is an ideal place to house the speedway.

MALCOLM DAVIS
Cromwell Drive
Dudley

LETTERS to the Editor**POST**

Halesowen Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Double standards on protecting our parks

I READ in awe that Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, has won lottery cash towards a long-awaited revamp and that the main 'listed' park gates will also be spruced up.

I was also intrigued to read that Dudley Council is committed to maintaining our valuable parks and green spaces. We ourselves, members of The Friends of Homer Hill Park, Cradley, can only watch as our small park is being destroyed by developers with the full consent and help of the very same council which itself is trying to tell us it will be an improvement and beneficial to our park.

Since when has a park track being turned into an access road to a housing development, which in turn cuts the park in half, been an improvement or benefit to any park, green space or its users?

When it comes to the park gates, I suppose being listed does help as one of the main sets of our park gates which fronted the park have been taken down as part of this development and have unfortunately disappeared.

After inquiries no one seems to know what has happened to them. It seems to me that Dudley Council has two sets of standards when it comes to its self-confessed commitment to the local parks and green spaces.

MARY WHITEHOUSE, Butchers Lane, Cradley

A welcome for new bins

I HAVE been writing to Dudley Council since I moved to Kingswinford 20 years ago as it has been more than two decades behind other councils re-garding bins!

When you have a family it is a nightmare trying to store rubbish until your collection day. With a massive problem of cats, rats and foxes ripping open bin bags and waking up to rubbish all over your garden every Wednesday morning wheeling a bin in and out will be welcomed with open arms from our family!

MRS V GRIFFITHS
Kingswinford

Many thanks

I WOULD like to thank the very kind people who stopped to help my daughter and her boyfriend at the motorway island in Walsall recently when some idiot decided to go straight over a red light and straight into the side of them.

I still have some faith in human kindness. Thanks again.

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NEWS

Police are still looking into death of couple

A MURDER investigation was continuing this week after the bodies of a couple were found at their Rowley Regis home.

Post mortems have been carried out on Jane and Ken McRae. The bodies were found last Wednesday at their home in Bryan Budd Close.

The 55-year-old woman was found with head injuries.

Her 52-year-old husband was found with neck and wrist injuries.

Police have confirmed they are not looking for anyone else in connection with the deaths, and the case had been handed to the coroner.

Mr McRae worked as an electrician while his wife was a keen gardener, neighbours said.

Ordinary

Shaun O'Toole, 52, who lives opposite the couple, said: "They were an ordinary couple, he used to like to go for a run."

"He was very house-proud, she was always doing her garden and cleaning her windows, it is just a total shock what has happened, no one knows the reason for this."

"He was an electrician. Once there was a power cut in the street and he came round asking people if they needed torches, they were kind-hearted, both of them."

"They never had any visitors which I thought was weird."

Police were called around at 10am on Wednesday and used a battering ram to break down the door only to discover the bodies a short time later.

"I used to see him in the

morning setting his watch for a run."

"He would get up and jog every day before work, he went to work at around 7am and got home at roughly 5pm."

The couple were pronounced dead at the scene.

Flower power towers over gardener Pat



Pat Woodhall with the towering verbascum in her garden

THIS exotic looking plant has caused quite a stir over the garden fence in Halesowen in recent weeks. And standing at 7ft tall, the colourful flower has been towering over other fences to the bemusement of a keen gardening couple.

Ray Woodhall and his wife Pat noticed the plant growing in a border in the back garden and originally thought it was a foxglove. But they were stumped after it began to grow this spring, soaring higher than others in the gardens.

Mrs Woodhall said she believes a bird dropped the seeds onto the soil as she had never heard of the plant previously.

But after some investigation they discovered that the plant is a verbascum with velvet textured leaves - some measuring 3ft by 2ft - growing down from the main stem. Six spiked flower heads rise up from the top of the plant surrounded by ornate small yellow flowers.

"We are both keen gardeners but we have never seen anything like it before," said Mrs Woodhall, of Abbot Road, Hayley Green. "It's become quite a talking point. It has grown quite tall now, it towers over me."

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NEWS

Council staff are warned over £5.5m card spending

Little princess pips royal baby



Celebrating are Sarah Parton and Christian Nash with Jorgie-May Nash who was born just minutes before the royal baby

WHILE the eyes of the world were fixed on St Mary's Hospital in Paddington waiting for news of the royal baby, one Coseley couple were busy having their own 'little princess' at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital.

Sarah Parton pipped the Duchess of Cambridge to the post and gave birth to a baby girl named Jorgie-May on Monday at 4.09pm – just 15 minutes before Kate.

At 6lb 5oz Jorgie-May is lighter than the royal boy and at three hours, Miss Parton's labour was a good deal shorter than Kate's.

The 24-year old said: "I was induced at 1pm and had Jorgie-May three hours later. The next thing I knew, the nurses said the royal baby

was born 15 minutes after mine. It's crazy. The royal baby will be on the news all the time so I'll get to see them grow up together. I take a bit of an interest in the royals but I will do even more now that my daughter's got the same birthday."

Miss Parton plans to apply for a special silver coin, which will be offered to mothers whose babies share the royal birthday.

"It would be a lovely memento for her to grow up with," she said.

Miss Parton's partner Christian Nash, 22, had joked their baby could be born on the same day. Mr Nash said: "We said it would be mad if they were born at the same time but we didn't think it would only be 15 minutes apart."

THE leader of Dudley Council written to employees about purchases on credit cards after an investigation found they spent £5.5 million in a year on plastic.

Among the things bought by council staff were flights to attend award shows in Edinburgh and fast food from KFC.

Councillor David Sparks said he was surprised by the figures and demanded the circumstances were double checked.

But he reiterated the use of the cards were made during the course of the 'normal business of the council'.

The council paid more than £417 flying three staff to Edinburgh for an awards ceremony. The return flights to the Edge Innovation Awards were considered the most economic way because the return train fares were around £200 per person.

Tackle

It has also funded 147 transactions at KFC or McDonald's, which council bosses say may have been for children.

Councillor Sparks said the food bought for children would be reconsidered after the authority launched a five-year plan to tackle obesity in the borough. Figures show 21 per cent of people are obese in Dudley.

The authority was the biggest spender of the region's councils, with £5.5m from 2011 to 2012 paid on 862 corporate cards.

Staff made 50,407 transactions in 12 months, including meals in top restaurants and nights in hotels around the country.

Councillor Sparks said: "I have written to all members of the council. I want to point out that we do not have corporate credit cards. There are some references in there to expenditure that does not look right as far as I'm concerned and I've asked for that to be double checked."

"The cards are used for the normal business of the council."

He will also query why £221.15 was paid at the upmarket Tree Hotel, High Wycombe, and £885 at Halesowen Golf Club and £102 at Himley House will be reviewed.

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NEWS

Blindfolded MP finds out difficulties of taking bus



James Morris MP joins Royal National Institute for the Blind campaigner Victoria Richards for his bus journey

MP James Morris has been blindfolded to take a bus journey in Halesowen to experienced the difficulties visually impaired people face on public transport.

It was part of a campaign to highlight the issue nationally.

The initiative is being run by the Royal National Institutes for the Blind.

It aims to produce a report and audio document on the experiences of blind bus users to be presented

to Transport Minister Norman Baker. The report will be used to push for mandatory disability awareness training when the Department of Transport reviews the issue next year.

To help understand the problems visually impaired people face, Mr Morris, Conservative MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis, was blindfolded by RNIB volunteer campaign coordinator Victoria Richards, from Halesowen, then taken on a bus journey from the town's bus station on Tuesday.

The aim was to demonstrate the barriers

people with sight loss face using buses on a day-to-day basis. Afterwards, Mr Morris said: "It was a very useful experience to go with Victoria and see the obstacles that the partially-sighted face in getting around our area.

"Having previously raised disabled access with National Express, I know that they are already doing a lot to improve things, but Tuesday's experience gave me a new perspective on how much there still is for all public transport companies to do to make their buses accessible to people with visual impairments."

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NEWS

Epic journey for rider's vintage bike



Jonathan Clarke with the 1947 New Hudson motorcycle which he used for his charity 600-mile challenge

A CLASSIC bike enthusiast jumped on his vintage motorcycle for a charity challenge from John O'Groats to Land's End.

Jonathan Clarke, aged 21, completed the journey of more than 600 miles on his 1947 New Hudson bike earlier this month.

Mr Clarke, who works as a classic car trimmer, said he had heard of other people embarking on the challenge but had wanted to do it a little differently.

He decided to use the vintage cycle for the journey. Mr Clarke, of Wolverhampton Road, Sedgley, started out on his epic challenge on July 1.

The bike has a cruising speed of between 22mph and 25mph and the total journey took him nine days to complete.

He raised £1,000 for the Midlands

Air Ambulance from the challenge with sponsorship donated by friends, family and work colleagues.

Mr Clarke said: "I know quite a few people have done this challenge but they have tended to use modern cycles. I want to do something a bit different.

"I am a bike enthusiast and purchased the New Hudson from ebay. All I have done to the bike since receiving it is to re-build the engine."

"Part of the reason I wanted to stage this challenge was to prove the bike could do it and I am really pleased to have done that."

Mr Clarke thanked everyone who had supported him in the challenge. He works for Aldridge Trimming, which specialises in fitting out the interiors of classic vehicles such as Jaguars and Mercedes.



Journey's end for Jonathan Clarke

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Hairdresser cuts links with home**Jackie Bourne says her goodbyes to Ann Robbins**

RESIDENTS at a care home in Cradley Heath have said an emotional farewell to a hairdresser who has cut hair there for more than 20 years.

Jackie Bourne, from Quarry Bank, has cutting the hair of hundreds of residents at Trinity House, Mace Street.

Resident Ann Robbins presented Jackie with a leaving gift just after lunch with a mixture of residents, relatives and staff taking part in the farewell.

Residents joined together in describing Jackie as a fantastic friend who had always treated them with the utmost care as well as a very professional service.

Home manager Jayne Griggs said: "We shall be sad to see Jackie leave after so many years."

"We can only express our gratitude for her long service."

African visit is life-changing experience for headteacher

A CRADLEY Heath headteacher has spoken of her 'life-changing experience' after teaching at an African school.

Marcia Harris, who works at Cradley CE Primary School, travelled to Tanzania with a colleague, her two daughters, Rachel, aged 11 and Emily, 16, and her husband David, a teacher at Newman College.

She spent a week teaching a range of lessons including maths and English at the Gairo B School and organised a sports day.

Mrs Harris said: "We have a link with Gairo B which was formed by the Diocese of Worcester and this is the second time I have visited Tanzania.

"It was wonderful seeing some friendly faces and it was a really beneficial trip for both the school children and my own children.

"The whole experience has been a real eye-opener and was one of highs and lows.

"The only way for these children to escape poverty is by getting an education so it was fantastic to see so many coming to school to see us."

The Cradley school collected money to pay for Mrs Harris and her colleague to visit Cradley in September.

It is hoped two members of staff from Tanzania will visit Cradley in September.

The case of Sherlock exploits

THE stories of Sherlock Holmes are being re-imagined in Cradley Heath tomorrow night. Theatre Company Don't Go into the Cellar will perform The Singular Exploits of Sherlock Holmes at Haden Hill Hall at 6pm and 8pm. Tickets costing £6 are available from the museum on 01384 569 444.

"We can only express our gratitude for her long service."



Headteacher Marcia Harris' children Rachel and Emily with some of the Tanzania pupils they met

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Library goes creepy for the holiday

WITH the schools broken up for the summer holidays, Cradley Heath Library is putting on activities to keep the youngsters busy for the next six weeks.

The Upper High Street library will be hosting a series of creepy Friday events held from 2.30pm to 3.30pm to get children's creative juices flowing.

Starting tomorrow (Friday) children will be able to have a go at making a very hungry caterpillar and paint splat butterflies.

On August 2 brave children will be able to make a creepy ghost house and create a spooky pasta skeleton the following Friday.

For those with a real sense of adventure a ghost story session will be held on August 16 and on August 23 and August 30 there will be a chance to make your critters out of recycled cardboard.

For more details call the library on 01384 569 316.

Sowing seeds to aid wildlife

WORK has begun to sow thousands of wild flower seeds at a park in Cradley Heath to attract wildlife.

Volunteers from the Black Country and park friends' groups have joined forces with Sandwell Council and the Wildlife Trust on the project at Haden Hill Park.

Council environment boss Councillor Maria Crompton said: "It will make them even more colourful for the public to enjoy."

NEWS

Firm lifted by precision project for £1.5m crane

A KINGSWINFORD engineering firm celebrated a major milestone after completing work on a £1.5 million project to build a steel structure for a nuclear crane.

TM Engineers, Oak Lane, took two years to build the crane which will be used to remove dangerous nuclear fuel rods from Royal Navy submarines.

The 40ft crane weighs almost 60 tonnes and features five sections, including a fixed bridge beam supported by two sets of legs.

Workers clocked up more than 8,000 hours of welding on the structure.

The quality requirements were so high that each weld had to be inspected by engineers from MoD contractors Babcock International Group.

John Perch, of Brierley Hill, who has worked for the firm as a welder for the past five years, said: "The level of skill required for this job was very high.

Significant

"As welders we were tested to our limits because even a gap the size of a pin hole would be classed as a defect and the piece would have to be scrapped."

Managing director Robert Holland said: "This was a significant job for the company, involving around 50 staff - everyone from the office to the shop floor.

"The specifications we were given were very precise, and the crane will be inspected every five years to make sure there is no deterioration in quality or capability. "It is a unique structure, and as a firm we are very proud to have been involved in the project."

The decommissioning process can take up to 12 months and is necessary because the MoD is replacing 12 of the navy's current submarine fleet.

Mr Holland added: "Without the skill and dedication of our workforce



Managing director Robert Holland, centre right, and sales manager Richard Holland, centre left, flanked by welders John Peach, left, and Andy Plant in front of the RAH crane built in Kingswinford

the job would never have been completed."

Next month the crane will be dismantled and transported to the Devonport Royal Dockyard, Plymouth, where it will be reassembled on a dry

dock before being positioned underneath a reactor access house (RAH) which moves around the dry dock on a set of rails.

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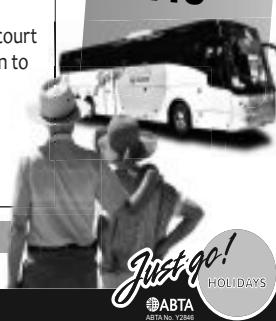
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NEWS

Dancers line up to bring in vital cash



Judy Evans, 69, of Bilton, with Michael King, 64, of Dudley, with teacher Jacqueline Faulkner, 44, of Willenhall

A LINE-DANCING group hopes to raise money for a cancer charity when it stages an event in Coseley. Jazzbox Jacq will show off its skills at Woodcross Social Club, in Woodcross Lane, tomorrow (Friday) starting at 8pm.

Cash raised will be donated to MacMillan Cancer Support with members of the group hoping more than 50 people will attend. Plans for the event were made after member Judy Evans said she did not want a traditional party to celebrate

her 70th birthday but wanted to do something different.

So the group decided to stage the event instead and bring in the cash for a good cause. Mrs Evans will also be celebrating her golden wedding anniversary.

The group has been running for six years and meets on Mondays and Wednesdays at the club. Jacqueline Faulkner, who runs the group, said they were all looking forward to the event. She can be contacted on 07786 929498.

Final £2.6m won for market

THE final £2.6 million grant has been secured to make the transformation of Dudley's historic market a reality.

Work will get under way in the new year at Dudley Market after the last slice of funding was won from the European Regional Development Fund, and tops up the required £6.7 million needed for the scheme.

The revamp, which was approved by Dudley Council last month, will

feature a newly-designed market, new paving, feature lighting and the repositioning of the Duncan Edwards statue to the other side of the market, at the New Street end.

An ageing toilet block will be replaced by a public toilet at the former Walmley's furniture store in Castle Street.

Traders had voiced concerns and recently submitted alternative plans to councillors. But members of the cabinet agreed to press ahead in order

to secure the European funding for the latest round of grant applications.

Council leader Councillor David Sparks said: "This investment will reap rewards for Dudley town centre as it is all part our plans to transform the retail offer in the town. High-quality street design such as this is a well proven way of creating economic benefits."

Dudley regeneration boss Councillor Judy Foster said: "This work will inject new life into the market place."

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NEWS

Work gets under way on £6m hotel development

They're ones that you'll like



Members of Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company get ready for Grease

YOUNG actors have been hopelessly devoted to their rehearsals to get ready for their production of hit musical Grease in Brierley Hill.

And their own impressive version of the Greased Lightning car was the centrepiece.

Members of Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company teamed up as T Birds and Pink Ladies to take to the stage and emulate their heroes John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John.

The production took place at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, in Bank Street, last Friday and Saturday.

A £6 million scheme to build a 80-bedroom hotel and restaurant aimed at boosting tourism in Stourbridge is under way.

Demolition work has started in preparation for the Premier Inn, Brewers Fayre restaurant and 122-space car park to be constructed on land off Birmingham Street.

Around 65 jobs are expected to be created in the joint venture between Barber Developments, Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants and Cox Hire Ltd.

The four-acre site was used for many years by Cox Hire, which has now relocated to Netherton.

Demolition work is set to be completed later this year with construction work due to begin on the hotel in the autumn. It is due to be completed by spring 2014.

Demolition of buildings is being carried out by DSM Demolition, which recently pulled down the Bell Street multi-storey to make way for the new Tesco supermarket.

Dudley Council granted permission for the hotel which will be built in a L-shape at a height of four-storeys, earlier this year.

Barker is in discussions with potential drive-thru operators for the site.

Bishop to hit the heights for funds

THE Bishop of Dudley is setting his sights on climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain, to raise money for a maternity unit in Tanzania.

The Rt Rev David Walker will be one of 13 people travelling from Worcester on August 20 to , spend six nights under canvas and facing challenges including temperatures of -20C.

Bishop David, aged 56, said: "It's going to be one of the most physically demanding things I've ever done." The team's fundraising page is <http://mydonate.bt.com/events/kilimanjarochallengeforberegahospit/101547>

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NEWS

Homes plan will bring vacant site back to life

A LONG-DISUSED factory site in Brierley is to be brought back to life after plans to build nearly 100 homes were approved.

Proposals for 96 houses on the land at Delph Road received unanimous approval from Dudley Council's development control committee last week.

A factory building will be demolished and the site will be split between 18 two-bedroom flats, 56 two and three-bedroom houses and 22 four and five-bedroom properties.

Developer Orchard Park Properties Ltd submitted the scheme to breathe new life into the site which has lain empty for more than a decade.

It was previously home to several manufacturers.

Committee member councillor Tim Wright said he was pleased the site was finally being developed.

"I can remember taking a look at this site for a pro-

posed development back in 2008 which came to nothing," he said. "I sincerely hope we will actually see building work taking place at the site soon."

Fellow committee member councillor John Martin agreed: "I can only echo what Councillor Wright has said.

"This site has been empty for a number of years and it is great something is now going to happen."

Plans for a footway as part of the development from Anchor Hill to Delph Road had been abandoned.

by Lee Watton

Mammoth task for archive volunteers



Archivist Helen Donald, centre, with volunteers Sally Cartwright and Alex Homer

VOLUNTEERS and staff from an archive service have begun the huge task of boxing up two miles worth of documents in preparation for Dudley Borough archives and local history service in Coseley's big move to its new £6 million headquarters in Tipton Road, Dudley.

A team of 22 volunteers has been recruited to help staff prepare for the move. They have received specialist training to help pack and box up the often priceless archive material, which includes precious documents, maps, books, journals and photographs.

All items have to be carefully handled and packaged in specific ways to ensure they are not damaged or exposed to the light. The new centre is due to be completed next month, with the move scheduled for October.

Reduced

Councillor Stuart Turner, Dudley Council cabinet member for archives, said: "It is a huge and challenging task for our staff to methodically and systematically package up all of the precious archives."

"We really do appreciate all the help from such a dedicated team of volunteers. The boxing up process will continue over the summer months."

From this week there will be reduced service provided by the archives team as the preparations to move gear up.

The current centre in Mount Pleasant Street, Coseley will open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am to 4pm. As space will be limited people are advised to book their visit in advance. The service will also continue to be contactable by phone and email.

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Springboard into action as Zumbathon raises £1,300

ENTHUSIASTIC over-50s showed they had all the moves by taking part in a sponsored 'Zumbathon'.

A group of 30 people raised £1,300 for Age UK Dudley at the event at Brierley Hill Methodist Church, Bank Street.

Instructor Joanna Handley said: "It was a fantastic event and everyone had a great laugh and was very cheerful."

The Zumbathon, which took place on July 15, was part of the charity's Springboard project, which provides activities for more than 350 people, the oldest of whom is 100 years old.

Another participant, Brenda Christie, aged 63, who lives in Stourbridge, said: "I thoroughly enjoyed it and I couldn't believe how quickly the

time went. The afternoon made me feel really good and I've come away having made some more friends."

Jenny Worwood, the charity's Springboard coordinator, thanked everybody who took part.

She added: "The afternoon was a great success and everyone really enjoyed themselves."

"We are so grateful for everyone's effort and supporting us, especially in the heat."

"This great achievement will help keep our Springboard project running."

"It is wonderful to receive support from individuals and, as a charity, our services would not be possible without the support from the community through fundraising."



Brenda Christie, second left, with other Zumbathon participants and Jenny Worwood, Age UK Dudley's Springboard project coordinator, and Zumba instructor Joanna Handley, seventh left

Care group investment call as HQ up for sale

THE former Brierley Hill Labour Club, which has been transformed into a carers charity headquarters, is being auction today. The building, which is now home to Insight for Carers, has an asking price of £170,000.

Charity bosses said the potential sale is not disrupting their work and maintain the centre will stay open.

Insight For Carers was established in January 2009 by Marc Carter, who is a carer himself and struggled to find the appropriate support he needed.

They have converted the former club building thanks to donations from business and support from volunteers creating a thriving centre.

The Pearson Street building is let to the charity until 2019 at an annual rent of £24,000.

Mr Carter said he would welcome new investors to buy the site and work with the charity to further boost its work.

Welcome

"The building has gone up for sale but the charity will not be affected as we have our lease agreement," he said.

"We would welcome a new landlord to buy the building and invest in it and work with us."

Insight supports adult and young carers in Dudley borough through social gatherings, information workshops and practical advice on benefits.

The centre recently held a range of activities during National Carers Week. The



Home of Insight for Carers in Brierley Hill

venue also runs its own cafe called the Secret Coffee Club from the premises. Volunteers recently took over The Phoenix Castle Mobile Toy Library which was due to close down imminently, two years after losing £23,000 of vital funding from Dudley Council.

But volunteers stepped in to run the service which loans out hundreds of games and toys to children with disabilities and special needs in Dudley borough each year.

Volunteers take toys out to families' homes in their own van, lending out the items for as long as they are needed.

The initiative has operated in part for around 40 years and is believed to be the oldest of its kind in the country.

The auction is taking place in London.

Fun the park to welcome meadow

A MEADOW, which has been created at Quarry Bank park, will be at the centre of a community family event. Wildlife in the Wildflowers will take place at park, off Thorns Road, on July 30, and families are invited to join the fun.

Wardens from the nearby Saltwells Nature Reserve will lead a tour of the wildflower meadow from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Visitors are also invited to take a picnic and enjoy the surroundings of the park during the afternoon.

To join the walk, people should book a place and meet at the car park at the park. Call Saltwells wardens on 07920 235036 to book a place.

Councillor Tracy Wood, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "Quarry Bank Park is a popular green space for residents in the local community."

"The addition of the meadow area is just part of a number of further developments at the park. The council county side staff and the Friends of Quarry Bank Park are working closely together on these enhancements."

Borough bucks trend as jobless figure falls

JOB queues are getting shorter in Dudley borough, new figures have revealed.

The number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance in the borough fell by 3,657 last month.

The drop could be partly due to the jobs boom in neighbouring Sandwell, where the £200 million New Square shopping development has seen hundreds of people recruited for new stores including a Tesco Extra.

In neighbouring Kidderminster and Wyre Forest the claimant count was down by 112 to 2,138, while in South

Staffordshire it fell by 58 to 1,555.

The drop came despite a rise in overall unemployment in the West Midlands, which rose by 15,000 to 268,000.

Nationwide unemployment fell 57,000 to 2.51 million in the three months to May, the Office for National Statistics said.

The national total for people claiming the allowance fell 21,200 to 1.48m. The two figures differ because not everyone classed as unemployed is eligible to claim Jobseeker's Allowance.



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NEWS

Bench ban to deter gangs

PROBLEMS with drunk-en anti-social behaviour is on the rise in Lower Gornal as gangs congregate during the afternoon and evening, it is claimed.

Large groups are gathering around benches in Abbey Road, intimidating shoppers and causing a nuisance for traders.

The situation has got so bad councillors are considering removing the benches to try and tackle the problem. Plans have also been put forward to restore a CCTV camera which was removed after suffering damage. Councillor Tim Wright said it was desperately needed.

Store brand is boost to charity

A SHOP in Dudley is donating the profits from the sale of a food brand in its store to a cancer support charity in the borough.

White House Cancer Support has so far received £500 thanks to Nisa Local Store, Nith Place. Owners Sam and Dal Rai launched the partnership after the charity was picked as one of the Dudley Mayor Alan Finch's for the year.

White House manager Chris Barron said: "We are very grateful for support of the Nisa Local Store."

Kit is donated

FOOTBALL kit donated by a junior club based in Wall Heath has been handed over to youngsters in Kenya. Kewford Eagles Football to the RAF's Flying Football to Africa and Beyond appeal. Charity trustee and vice chairman of Kewford, Lynn Boleyn said: "We are really glad to be able to help."

Old classmates on track for trip full of school memories

FORMER classmates from Dudley Girls High School climbed aboard a vintage steam train for a trip down Memory Lane at a 60th anniversary reunion.

The seven-strong group, who started at the school on September 15, 1953, gathered at Kidderminster's Severn Valley Railway for the landmark celebration.

And they reminisced over old times looking though old photographs and even a school register from their first day at the school, which stood in Priory Road until its demolition in 1996.

The group wanted to do something different to mark 60 years since starting at the school and decided on a trip along the railway.

They also enjoyed lunch in Highley before taking a trip to Bridgnorth.

The group said it had been a wonderful occasion to reminisce over old times.

All of the group were in the same form at the school and the majority left in 1958.

Contact

Although many stayed in touch, contact was lost with others until the demolition of the school in 1996 brought them back together.

Valerie Wyatt, formerly Hadley, 71, of Stockport, said: "When the announcement was made the school would be torn down former pupils were invited along to have a last look around.

"Some of us had kept in contact with each other but we had lost touch with others. Although it was a sad occasion it brought us all back together.

"This was then strengthened by reunions held afterwards and we now try to meet whenever we can.

"It is always wonderful to meet up and talk over old times. "This reunion is obvi-



Front from left Margaret Tait, Carol Bourton, Hazel Leach, Val Wyatt, back from left, Viv Summers, Pat Halford, and Margaret Harris



The seven girls back on a school trip in 1958 were classmates and have remained friends

ously very special as it marks the 60th anniversary of us starting at the school."

Viv Summers, nee Greaves, 71, of Sedgley, said favourite lessons had included modern dance which had been very new to the curriculum at the time.

And the group fondly remembered a trip to Bruges in 1958 which was the first time they had been overseas.

Mrs Summers said: "Unfortunately as the pictures show even though we were overseas

we still had to wear our school uniform. That wouldn't happen now. Children would be able to wear their casual clothes.

Margaret Harris, 71, of Stourbridge, said she believed the entire trip had cost around £18 - and there had still been some change left.

Margaret Tait, formerly Nettleton, 70, of Wombourne, said: "We always like getting together when we can."

Last year the group, which also includes

Carol Bourton, nee Hemmings, Hazel Leach, nee Morton and Pat Halford, nee Jones, were invited to attend a dinner at the House of Commons.

It was organised by Baroness Jenny Tonge, a former doctor and Liberal Democrat MP for Richmond Park who also attended Dudley Girls' School.

The high school served the community for 65 years until it became the Dudley School following a merger in 1975.

Battle to preserve theatre continues

CAMPAIGNERS will hit the streets to whip up support in a last-ditch bid to save Dudley Hippodrome from the bulldozers this weekend.

A decision on whether the theatre on Castle Hill can be torn down will be taken by councillors on August 5.

But protesters want to raise awareness of the building's plight and educate residents on their plans for its future.

The demonstration will take place on Saturday at the fountain at Dudley market place, High Street, from 11am.

Campaigners will hand out leaflets and chat to shoppers to try to highlight their vision for the venue.

Protesters are also making placards but they say the gathering will remain peaceful.

Campaign leader Geoff Fitzpatrick said: "We think it is a good way of showing the council that we mean business while also getting the message out there."

He added: "The Hippodrome could be an amazing community hub, and bring tens of thousands of visitors to Dudley."

Members of the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome group discussed the issue with the borough's regeneration boss Councillor Judy Foster last week and Mr Fitzpatrick said the talks were positive.

The Dudley Regeneration Group has also objected to the demolition.

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DONNA 42ys young separated female who is ready to start dating again, bubbly, attractive, blonde and caring to get going, come on don't keep me waiting. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406431

SLIM 32yr old blonde, kind, caring, good listener, honest, likes to have fun, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393973

28YR old brunette, seeks fun loving, adventurous male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 380918

PAULINE, passionate, intelligent, discreet married lady seeks discreet specimen of any age, call for more info. Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box 393087

JANET looking for handsome prince to spoil me in return for lots of good fun and well deserved uncomplicated attention. Discretion assured. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 405823

NEW to dating and a little nervous, Susan very attractive 30yr old curly single mum, looking for fun times with similar outgoing male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 405809

SARAH 24, blonde, brown eyes, attractive, slim, seeks male with GSOH, 30's in Kidderminster area for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406139

ATTRACTIVE female, young, 49, 5ft 7ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, genuine, loyal, easygoing, GSOH, seeks tall, handsome male 40-50 for fun times, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406135

SINGLE cuddly female, 5ft 6ins, green eyes seeks male, 40-50 for fun and more Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406015

DISCREET kind man sought by married lady. Must be discreet and reliable as am I. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box 355785

WIDOW young hearted 70's, N/S, likes reading, concerts, gardening, meals out, WLTM younger gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 404177

MARIA 38, blonde, 5ft 5ins, caring, likes nights in/out, seeks caring male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 329319

NAT easygoing pretty, honest 24yrs, enjoys cosy nights in, romantic walks, holding, keeping fit, WLTM fun, loving, energetic male, looks/age unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406117

JANE attractive, seeking male for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 403807

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BLONDE attractive educated lady 50, young minded, seeks professional tall male, 45-55 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391818

YOUNG looking, pretty female, 40, brunette, slim, no ties, N/S, seeks attractive, refined male for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 31315

JANICE 40, 5ft 5ins, medium build, brown eyes, likes music, cooking, cosy night in/out, seeks similar male for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397407

CARLA 41, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 2ins, loving, seeking male who likes walks, cinema and romantic meals. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396127

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JANE 48yrs West Midland, likes meals out, cinema, theatre looking for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 403949

PAT 67, attractive, likes reading, holidays, seeking female, 65-72 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 40906

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SHAZ 33 easygoing voluptuous black female with lovely smile and personality to match, loves music, keeping fit and looking good, WLTM appreciative guy Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394819

62YR old female, widowed, small, slim, attractive, kind, outgoing, likes meals out, dancing, holidays, nights in, seeking professional gent. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394106

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CLUB NEWS

Trips take the place of meeting

Barbecue cash adds up to a sizzling £900

CLENT
GARDENING
CLUB

THE club had two evening outings in June instead of its usual meeting.

The first was to Meadow Farm Garden & Nursery, which was a great success. The weather was good and there was a good turn out of members.

The second was to Preen Manor Gardens at Much Wenlock. The weather had been wet most of the day but as the evening approached the sun came out enabling everyone to enjoy the gardens. There was also a beautiful church in the gardens built in the 11th century which was worth the visit alone.

The next club meeting will be on July 28 at Clent parish hall, with a talk by Dr John Page entitled 'The Joys of English Gardens'.

All are welcome to attend. Anyone interested in either joining or visiting can get further details on clentgardenclub.wordpress.com/ or by calling chairman Pat Orme on 01384 394451.

September 7 is the 67th annual flower show in Clent parish hall. It will feature locally grown produce is judged by the WI, home made cakes for sale, a raffle, and a chance to enter your own home-grown produce.

There is also a section for children to enter. All entries must be in by 11am on the day.



Wolverhampton Soroptimists president Parkash, Mike Colley and Mike Colley

ON June 30, the club hosted a barbecue in the garden of president Parkash's home.

Members and guests were joined by Mike Colley, President of Wolverhampton Rotary, plus committee members of the Wolverhampton Multiple Sclerosis Centre, including Peter and Cynthia Wright and Margaret King. Sponsors Gerald David and family of Minehead provided all the meat.

A buffet and bar were available for the 60-plus in attendance and there was a quiz.

Special thanks were given to all who had contributed, including those who had donated raffles prizes, helping to raise £900 for the president's special project - Wolver-

WOLVERHAMPTON
SOROPTIMISTS

hampton Multiple Sclerosis Centre and other supported club projects.

The after dinner speaker in July was Haley Jay of Haley J Couture of Shrewsbury, one of Britain's leading bridal wear designers and creator of gowns.

She gave an inspirational talk of how from early beginnings, working from her grandparent's garage she had built a business with an international reputation. The vote of thanks was given by Mary Harris

Newcomers made welcome

DUDLEY Widows & Friends Circle meets every second Saturday in the month at 2.15pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, Trinity Road, Dudley. It is a small friendly group

DUDLEY WIDOWS & FRIENDS CIRCLE

and has several events taking place during the year including meals out and Christmas lunch. Further details from 01902 881097 or 01902 676997. Old and new members will be very welcome.

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Thursday's - Curry Night: From 5pm £1.00

Get a Pint of Carlsberg or Tetleys for just with any Curry ordered!

Friday's - Steak Night: From 5pm £9.99

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2 x 14oz T-bones with Mushrooms and Onion Rings

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What's On! Halesowen

BLU-RAY REVIEWS

STUDIO Ghibli is the Japanese equivalent of Disney Studios when it comes to animated movies. They have been making beautifully animated films since the 1960s with the most famous probably being Spirited Away.

The difference with Ghibli, which may be as much cultural as to do with the creative individuals involved, is that their films are prone to much wilder flights of fancy, sometimes darker too, and humour takes a back seat to character and mood development. They are the connoisseur's cartoon.

Japanese

Two of their classics have made their Blu-Ray premieres, available individually or on double play for the crispest visuals yet and in both dubbed English and Japanese with English subtitles versions.

Kiki's Delivery Service (U) is the delightful tale of teenage witch Kiki who uses her broomstick skills to set up a courier service with her sarcastic cat Jiji for company.

Grave of the Fireflies (12) is further proof that animation is more than just kids' stuff. One respected critic has listed it among the greatest war films ever made.

It is the moving story of a pair of siblings trying to survive in the ruins of devastated Second World War Japan.

Leon Burakowski

Star-crossed lovers at the Manor House

SHAKESPEARE comes to Sandwell this summer when The Festival Players give an outdoor performance of one of the Bard's best loved plays at the Tudor Manor House in West Bromwich.

Performances of Romeo and Juliet will take place in the grounds of the beautiful 13th century museum building in Hall Green Road, West Bromwich, a perfect backdrop to outdoor theatre.

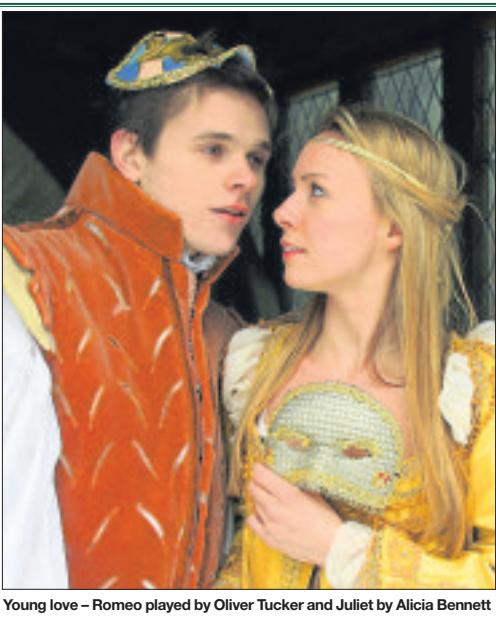
The performance is on Sunday, August 4, and gates will open at 4:15pm for people to bring a picnic. Then the performance begins at 5pm.

Visitors are asked to bring their own rugs or chairs to sit on, as well as their refreshments.

The classic story of young love blighted by warring families will be a popular choice.

Tickets can be bought online from thefestivalplayers.co.uk or at the Manor House on Thursdays to Sunday afternoons. Tickets costs £12 for adults in advance (£14 at the gate) and concessions £10 (£12 at the gate).

If the weather is bad the performance will be moved indoors.



Young love – Romeo played by Oliver Tucker and Juliet by Alicia Bennett

ROCK legends Magnum return home to the West Midlands tonight (Thursday) to headline at Biston's Robin 2 venue.

The line-up will feature Tony Clarkin on guitars, Bob Catley vocals, Mark Stanway keyboards, Al Barrow bass and Harry James on drums.

The progressive band were formed in Birmingham in 1972 by Clarkin and Catley, who survived numerous line-up changes.

Their biggest success was Chase The Dragon in 1982, which reached the top 20 album chart, and featured Soldier Of The Line, Sacred Hour and The Spirit.

Reunited

Their success continued with the gold-selling On A Storyteller's Night in 1985, which featured Just Like An Arrow.

The band disbanded in 1995 so that Catley could form a new band but they reunited in 2001 and have since released six more albums.

Last year, they released their most recent, On The 13th Day, and they remain firm favourites of rockers around the UK.

Clarkin revealed in April that he had been in the studio working on and recording new songs, which are set for

release in January 2014. The current working title is Escape From The Shadow Garden and it is scheduled for release next year.

Magnum show no signs of slowing down, after more than 40 years together.

Bob Catley said: "The older we get, the easier it becomes. It's a doodle. We've got it right at last; the right people in the band, the right production, the right songs, the right record company, the right fans, right everything. Magnum can go on for a long time."

"As soon as we get off tour Tony has a couple of days off and then he goes into his 'shed', his studio up his garden, and starts writing. Just ideas, playing for the love of creating something new."

"I'll probably hear something new again in about six months time, when he's got something to play me."

"When we go out we want to do new songs. We don't want to be a heritage band, that's not our style at all."

DOCTOR WHO

THE BBC AudioGO's ever-growing library of Doctor Who adventures, some original and some based on classic TV stories, has expanded further. Now there are more titles on CD or download to keep Who-vians occupied this summer as they wait for the big 50th anniversary.

The Destiny of the Doctor series features the seventh Doctor in the hour-long Shockwave by James Swallow, performed by Sophie Ace Aldred and Ian Brooker as the Time Lord. The Tardis lands on a world with inhabitants desperate to flee before it is engulfed by its sun.

In Shroud of Sorrow by Tommy Donbavand, the eleventh (current) Doctor goes back to 1963 to find Britain plunged into gloom, not only by President Kennedy's assassination but because people are haunted by the faces of dead friends and relatives. Read by Frances Barber for five hours 40 minutes.

Doctor Who and the Leisure Hive is an unabridged reading by Lalla 'Romana' Ward of one of the Target Books from the 1980s. The fourth Doctor finds himself on trial after he and Romana arrive at an intergalactic Las Vegas. It is a three hour and 45 minute epic, written by David Fisher. The fourth Doctor also features in the Babblesphere, by Jonathan Morris, in which he and Romana find an artists' paradise in decay. Lalla Ward and Roger Parrot perform the hour and 12 minute story.

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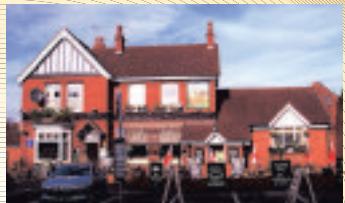
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SATURDAY'S TV 27.07.13

CHOICE



Nick Knowles

The National Lottery:
Break the Safe

BBC1, 8.50pm

Nick Knowles returns to our screens, demanding our prime-time attention once again, in another game show effort for the National Lottery. He's no stranger to this edge-of-your-seat format, and frankly it's nice to see him back. Nick oversees three couples thrashing it out in a question-and-answer session to see which of them will be the last pair standing. That pair will then get the chance to break the eponymous safe, but the winnings will depend entirely upon how much the pair has earned throughout the previous rounds.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast, **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Lorraine's Fast, Fresh and Easy Food. **12.00** BBC News Weather. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **12.45** Inspire: The Olympic Journey. New series, Magazine show, presented by Gabby Logan. **1.30** Live Athletics. The London Anniversary Games. **5.15** Formula 1: Hungarian Grand Prix - Qualifying. **6.40** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **7.00** Film: Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. (1984) The intrepid archaeologist travels to India, where he battles to retrieve sacred stones from the possession of an evil cult, all the while staying for the money in a safe. Includes the Lottery results. **9.40** BBC News: Weather. **10.00** Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes ends up at the wrong venue after trying to gatecrash Maria's hen party. She then tries to impress the bride-to-be's mother during a dinner date, but the evening ends in chaos. (R) **10.30** Film: Con Air. (1997) A parolee on his flight home intervenes when America's deadliest criminals hijack the plane. Action thriller, starring Nicolas Cage, John Cusack, John Malkovich and Steve Buscemi; National Lottery Update. **12.15** Film: The Jackal. (1997) **2.15** Weatherview. **2.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **6.30** Film: Mary of Scotland. (1936) **8.30** Film: Back to Bataan. (1945) **10.00** A History of Scotland. (R) **11.00** Life in the Freezer. (R) **11.30** University Challenge. (R) **12.00** The A to Z of TV Cooking. **12.45** EastEnders. (R) **2.40** Wild Shepherdess with Kate Humble. (R) **3.40** Springwatch Guide to Butterflies & Moths. (R) **4.00** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. **7.00** Film: The Hobbit: Desolation of Smaug. (2013) New series, Katie Derham presents a review of this season's concerts, including a report on Daniel Barenboim leading the Staatskapelle Berlin's performance of Wagner's Ring Cycle. **7.40** Dad's Army. Field-ever episode of the classic comedy, in which bank manager George Mainwaring assembles a motley crew of volunteers to protect Britain from Nazi invasion. Arthur Lowe stars. (R) **8.10** BBC Starck's Music & Monarchy. The historian examines the 17th century, when royalty presided over musical breakthroughs including the first chamber concerts and proto-operas. **9.10** The Lake. Robin makes a breakthrough in her investigation and also rekindles her relationship with Johnno Mitcham, but the reopening of old wounds leads to violence. **10.10** QI XL. With Sarah Millican, Jimmy Carr and Johnny Vegas. (R) **10.55** Film: The Kite Runner. (2007) Drama, starring Khalid Abdalla and Atossa Leoni. **12.55** Film: Women of Valor. (1986) **2.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Jake and the Neverland Pirates. **6.25** Poppy Cat. **6.40** Poppy Cat. **6.50** Cannibals. (R) **7.00** Coronation Street. (R) **7.20** Kick Buttowski - Subhuman Daredevil. **7.30** The Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes! **8.00** Gravity Falls. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Dinner Dates. (R) **9.25** Saturday Cookbook. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** Saturday Farm. **12.20** Film: The Wizard of Oz. **2.35** All Star Mr & Mrs. (R) **3.45** The Chase! (R) **3.05** Film: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. (2002) **6.00** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.15** ITV News; Weather. **6.30** You've Been Framed! Comical clips, featuring oridesmaids behaving badly. (R) **7.00** You've Been Framed! Funny footage, including a treadmill trauma. (R) **7.30** Your Face Sounds Familiar. Kian Egan joins Emma Bunton and Julian Clary on the panel as the celebrities impersonate more randomly selected icons. Alesha Dixon and Paddy McGuinness host. **8.45** All Star Family Fortunes. TV presenter Nadia Sawalha and Emmerdale star Jane Cox (Lisa Dingle) team up with their families in an attempt to win money for charity. Vernon Kay hosts the game show. **9.45** The Americans. **10.25** ITV News; Weather. **10.50** Film: The Invention of Lying. (2009) Comedy, starring Ricky Gervais. **12.40** Jackpot247. **3.00** In Plain Sight. (R) **3.45** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** Caterham Motorsports. **7.05** The Grid. **7.30** FIM Superbike World Championships. **8.00** The Morning Line. **8.15** Film: The Morning Glory. **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Frasier. (R) **10.35** Frasier. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.05** The Simpsons. (R) **1.35** Channel 4 Football. (R) **2.00** Film: The Dark Knight. (R) **4.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.25** Channel 4 News. **6.55** Ramadan Diaries. **7.00** When Bjork Met Attenborough. Singer Bjork and naturalist David Attenborough explore the relationship between humans and music and how technology might transform the way people engage with it in the future. **8.00** Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud follows the progress of two architects who are planning to build an eco-friendly subterranean house underneath a ruined 300-year-old barn in the Cotswolds. (R) **9.00** Film: X-Men Origins: Wolverine. (2009) The mutant hero returns to his military unit seeking revenge as he is drawn into a battle with his psychotic brother. Superhero prequel, starring Hugh Jackman. **11.10** Real Heroes. Alex Zane presents a countdown of internet stars. **12.10** Film: Trading Places. (1983) **2.20** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.35** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.30** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.35** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.00** Film: The Incredibles. (R) **11.30** Big Brother: Live Eviction. (R) **12.55** Film: The Dirty Dozen. (1967) Second World War action adventure, with Lee Marvin. **3.55** Film: Jesse Stone: Thin Ice. (2009) **7.10** NCIS. Abby becomes personally involved in the case of a missing naval scientist and makes a breakthrough when she decodes some of the markings covering the body. (R) **8.00** NCIS. The team members are surprised when Gibbs asks Tony's father to join them on a murder investigation. Guest starring Robert Wagner. (R) **8.55** NCIS. Part one of two, Ziva confronts her past when the team is ordered to protect her father. Mossad director Eli David at a gathering of former heads of NCIS. (R) **9.50** **5 News** **10.00** Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary-room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley. **11.00** Big Brother's Bit on the Side. (R) **11.30** Bit on the Side, presented by a panel of psychologists and celebrity fans to analyse the housemates' behaviour. **12.00** SuperCasino. **4.00** Nick's Quest. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.00** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.10** Film: The Valley of the Dolls. (R) **5.20** Film: Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hana's Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00** Olympic Opening Ceremony 2012 – Isles of Wonder. **9.30** Live at the Apollo. **10.15** Russell Howard's Good News Extra. **11.00** Family Guy **BBC Four** **7.00** John Sergeant on Tracks of Empire. **8.00** Oceans. **9.00** War of the Worlds: Firewall. **10.25** When Rock Goes Acoustic. **11.25** Acoustic at the BBC **ITV2** **4.55** Film: Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi. (1983) **7.30** Film: The Incredibile Hulk. (2008) **9.45** Film: 2 Fast 2 Furious. (2003) **11.55** Lemon La Vida Loca **ITV3** **2.40** Agatha Christie's Poirot. **4.55** Housewife, 49. **6.45** Foyle's War **9.00** Lewis. A babysitter is murdered. **11.00** Cold Blood **Film4** **3.45** Film: The Far Country. (1994) **6.00** Film: Shaka Zulu. (1989) **8.10** Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment. (1985) **10.00** Hell on Wheels. **11.00** Film: Monty Python's The Meaning of Life. (1983) **E4** **5.30** The Mindy Project. **6.00** The Big Bang Theory. **7.00** Suburgatory. **7.30** How I Met Your Mother. **8.30** Happy Endings. **9.00** Film: There's Something About Mary. (1998) **11.20** Phone Shocker. **11.55** The Inbetweeners **Westminster Recliners**   *Low Price Guarantee**

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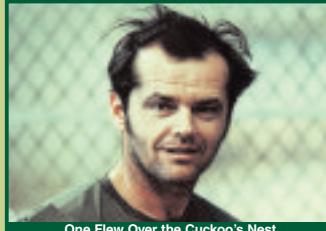
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Film Choices

MONDAY

Michael Collins, BBC1, 11.40pm

Fact-based drama focusing on the life of the Irish radical who rose to prominence after his involvement in the 1916 Easter Rising against British rule. He became a hero to his countryfolk before his single-minded determination to stick to his plans alienated him from his allies. Written and directed by Neil Jordan, and starring Liam Neeson, Julia Roberts, Alan Rickman, Aidan Quinn and Stephen Rea. (1996)



One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Tuesday, BBC1, 11.50pm

TUESDAY

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, BBC1, 11.50pm
A rebellious convict gets himself sent to a psychiatric hospital, thinking it will be easier than prison. Finding himself surrounded by institutionalised patients, he encourages them to rebel against the tyrannical head nurse. Drama based on Ken Kesey's novel, starring Jack Nicholson, Brad Dourif and Danny DeVito. (1975)

WEDNESDAY

DOA, BBC1, 11.45pm

A burned-out college professor is accused of murdering his wife's lover, and tries to cope by going on an all-night drinking binge – but wakes to discover someone has slipped him a fatal poison, leaving him with just 24 hours to find his would-be killers. Remake of the 1950 thriller, with Dennis Quaid, Meg Ryan, Charlotte Rampling, Daniel Stern and Jane Kaczmarek. (1988)

THURSDAY

The Rookie, BBC1, 11.35pm

A talented baseball player's dreams of turning professional end with an injury. Years later, he takes up the sport again when he agrees to coach a high-school team. However, a light-hearted wager with the players obliges him to try to make a comeback to the big time – with astonishing results. Fact-based drama, with Dennis Quaid, Rachel Griffiths, Jay Hernandez, Beth Grant and Angus T. Jones. (2002)

FRIDAY

The River Wild, ITV, 10.35pm

A headstrong white-water rafting expert embarks on a holiday with her family, but their fun comes to an abrupt end when two killers show up. The fugitives' only escape route from the law is down a raging river, so they take the woman and her son hostage to act as guides. Meanwhile, her husband desperately tries to keep track from the riverbank, waiting for his opportunity to launch a rescue attempt. Action thriller, with Meryl Streep, Kevin Bacon, David Strathairn and Joseph Mazzello. (1994)

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Pick of the Week

New series is safe in Nick's reliable hands

Nick Knowles has found a cosy little place for himself among the Beeb's most desirable programmes. Well, he's got the women falling at his feet and he's pretty nifty with a power tool – the man's got a lot going for him.

And while many of the female population will be down-hearted to learn Nick's recently got married, all things considered, this man is a genius telly.

Tonight, he returns to our screens in Break the Safe, demanding our prime-time attention once again (and he'll get it), in another game show effort for the National Lottery.

He's no stranger to this edge-of-your-seat format, having fronted Who Dares Wins and Secret Fortune twice before, and frankly it's nice to see him back.

Nick oversees three couples thrashing it out in a question-and-answer session to see which of them will be the last pair standing. That pair will then get the chance to break the eponymous safe, which could contain up to £100,000, but

will depend entirely upon how much the pair has earned throughout the previous rounds.

For Nick, surely the busiest man in telly, this is one project he's particularly proud of. He explains: "The BBC [has] decided to pull this thing together; the best team of the best people they could get to make a quiz show on a Saturday night; exec producers, game show creators, stage designers, so it's a proper let's-go-for-it-big Saturday night quiz show."

The result has been four years in the making. It's about relationships basically, brother and sister, mum and son, best friends, coming in pairs to play in a game where they have to work together, to answer questions, to earn money and trust each other about how much they know about each other's knowledge."

Fortunately, this gripping effort won't interfere with the work with which Nick has built up quite a name for himself. DIY SOS, and, touch wood, there will be plenty more of those in the making too.

But how does Nick feel about his widely varied job?

"Well the thing for me has always been, as anybody in television will tell you, what you should do is do one thing and stick to it because the audience don't like you to hop around all over the place."

"My whole career, I've made sure that the next thing I do is nothing like the last thing I did. But I'm at the point now where the audience, I think, will pretty much let me do any kind of programme."

He adds: "I think people get a break and then think I'm famous, all I have to do is turn up, whereas I think probably because of the background I've come from, I'm always expecting it to finish any day so the next programme has to be better than the last one, and we have to produce the best possible programme that we can."

For those of you with hopes of winning your own small fortune tonight, the Lotto and Thunderball draws will of course feature.



Nick Knowles hosts The National Lottery: Break the Safe, Saturday, BBC1, 8.50pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY
Caligula with Mary Beard
BBC2, 9pm

He was born Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus – but everyone knew him as Caligula. In the centuries since his death, it's fair to say that the former Roman emperor's image has become rather tarnished. It's been said that he proclaimed himself a living god, married his sister, made his horse a consul, and took part in scandalous orgies. But was he really as maniacal as has been suggested? In this one-off documentary, Mary Beard aims to find out. She travels across areas of the world that were once part of the mighty Roman Empire in an attempt to find evidence of Caligula's true personality, uncovering facts about the statesmen that could provide vital clues about what he really got up to.

TUESDAY
Love Your Garden
ITV, 8pm

What Alan Titchmarsh doesn't know about greenery, let's face it, probably isn't all that worth knowing. In his latest series, he's shown we lazy types that we don't need to be rolling in money, or have all the time in the world, to make our gardens look loved and presentable. Tonight, Alan comes to the aid of Rhianne Nixon who has been confined to a wheelchair by Motor Neurone Disease. She has moved to a small bungalow where the garden is dominated by a wooden viewing platform that she can't access. And being a former holistic practitioner, Rhianne's dream is to have a space filled with colour and fragrance.

Why Don't You Speak English?
Channel 4, 9pm

In the concluding episode, the immigrants are still trying to get to grips with the English language, but now halfway through their period of learning, the tables are turned and it's the Brits who are going to get a lesson in culture. They've lived in Britain for over a year, originally hailing from Poland, Columbia, China and the Democratic Republic of Congo. After spending a week in the homes of their British hosts, it's now the turn of the immigrants to play host to the hosts.

WEDNESDAY
You Saw Them Here First
ITV, 8pm

We all know the feeling of utter horror when the proud man in front of all the family insists on dusting down that old video of you playing among the wrapping paper on Christmas Day as wee youngster. So spare a thought for the celebrities featured in this new series, which shames them on a much bigger scale. The programme delves into the archives to reveal the television debuts of some of Britain's best-loved actors, presenters and pop stars, and first up there's a look back at daytime show This Morning, featuring a 15-year-old Kym Marsh, and teen singers Will Young and Lee Ryan looking for stardom.

Alex Brooker: My Perfect Body
Channel 4, 10.50pm

Little over a year ago, Alex Brooker was barely known. However, thanks to the world's eye being on the Olympics and Paralympics last year, he now looks likely to become a household name. In this documentary, the Channel 4 Paralympics and Last Leg presenter is exploring male body image, but aside from simply shedding light on how men really feel about their bodies, the show follows a personal challenge for Alex. He wants to lose two stone in weight and gain a six-pack – in two months. The programme hears from the presenter's mum who details his history of weight issues.



Alex Brooker: My Perfect Body, Wednesday, Channel 4, 10.50pm

THURSDAY
The Dealership
Channel 4, 8pm

When it comes to popularity and perceived trustworthiness, used car salesmen were once ranked somewhere between estate agents and politicians. But in these days of economic uncertainty, it seems it's more likely to be the customers driving a hard bargain. This new three-part series goes behind the scenes of the Essex Car Company, a family-run dealership in

Rainham, to give the tyres a metaphorical kick. We discover that the team of salesmen definitely have the patter, and in the case of James, the figures to back it up – he shifts 30 cars every month. But for new boy Scott, living on commission is proving to be tough, and he needs to start closing deals.

DIY SOS: The Big Build
BBC1, 9pm

Though some BBC bosses weren't happy with this series when it debuted in 1999, the fact seven million viewers got hooked on the first series led to many more and this spin-off show. This edition focuses on Eric Rivers, a terminally ill man suffering from motor neurone disease. Nick and co step in to carry out the alterations he needs to the terraced home Eric shares with his wife Davina and three daughters. The aim is to create more space, and to make the existing rooms more manageable for him.

FRIDAY
That Music Show
Channel 4, 10pm

When it comes to music, what Radio 1 Breakfast Show DJ Nick Grimshaw doesn't know about the sounds of 1995 and 2005 probably isn't all that worth knowing. So with this new, one-off quiz show, he pits the two years against each other as two teams consisting of the mouthiest musicians and cockiest comedians compete to determine who knows the most about each era. The show strikes a balance between traditional panel show and live music gig, as performances from Glaswegian alt-rock outfit Primal Scream and London-based electro pop duo AlunaGeorge punctuate proceedings.

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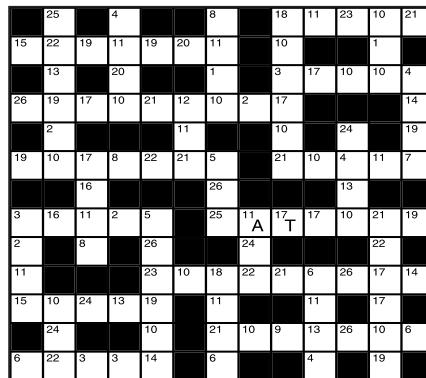
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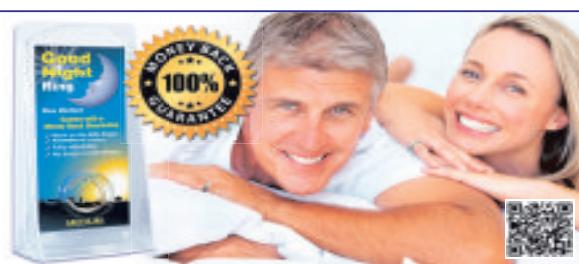
Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	B	I	Z	R	F	5	6	S	G	D	C	10	11	12	M	N
14	P	X	W	K	O	Q	V	Y	J	H	L	U	T			

**Double Crossword**

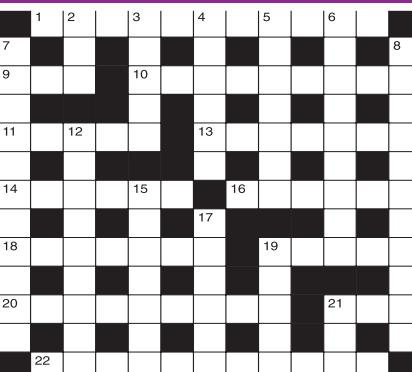
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:**Across**

- High cultivated features of modern cities (4-7)
- Everything, we hear, for shoemakers (3)
- Dreadful come-down for Alpine travellers (9)
- Fashionable race-course for a northern Briton (5)
- Siamese knit-wear? (4-3)
- Shelter for fliers (6)
- A donkey, it's about to help (6)
- Trampled, with or without study (7)
- Regal part of Troy, a long time ago (5)
- Their guns will be broken, you can safely bet on that! (4,5)
- He has nothing inside for the gardener (3)
- Their husbands didn't leave them unconsoled, apparently! (5,6)

Down

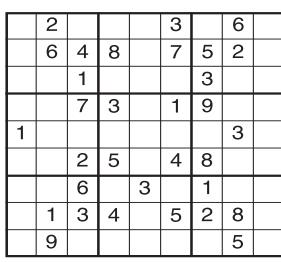
- Naturally, it lacks refinement (3)
- Spread strongly over the East (5)
- Stays will change a waist (6)
- Record books I'd come up to sign (7)
- Need no luxury (9)
- He will fall on his enemies (11)
- He prefers to be a man lacking spirit (11)
- A crowd of a hundred heading the right way (9)
- He will be called to account (7)
- I've now become available for inspection (2,4)
- Stiff clothes I'd put on (5)
- Cut out of the will (3)

**Quick Clues:****Across**

- Forerunner (11)
- Slash (3)
- Put off (5)
- Perpetrate (6)
- Young tree (7)
- At work (9)
- Not anxious (11)
- Hatred (11)
- Monetary (9)
- Clash (7)
- Reach (6)
- Handle (5)
- Everybody (3)

Down

- Pinch (3)
- Clock (9)
- Proposal (5)
- Copy (7)
- Misanthropes (6)
- Selfish person (6)
- Long curl (7)
- Compact (5)
- Get rid of (9)
- In the past (3)
- In turn (11)

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

6	2	5	7	9	3	4	1	8
4	1	7	6	2	8	5	9	3
9	8	5	1	4	6	7	2	0
3	4	2	0	5	1	6	8	7
2	7	9	6	4	1	3	6	5
5	1	3	6	2	9	4	7	8
7	9	4	1	8	5	2	3	6
1	5	2	4	3	6	7	8	9
8	6	3	2	7	9	1	5	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Legs; 3 Saw-bliss; 9 Frisked; 10 Cubit; 11 Overthrusting; 13 Extent; 15 Joiner; 17 Heart-disease; 20 Baton; 21 Transit; 22 Dressers; 23 Stay; Down: 1 Left-over; 2 Guide; 4 Adders; 5 Backwoodsman; 6 Lebanon; 7 Site; 8 Skating-rinks; 12 Priestly; 14 Trestle; 16 Editor; 18 Asset; 19 Abed. QUICK - Across: 1 Pert; 3 Preserve; 9 Erasers; 10 Trite; 11 Schoolmaster; 13 Raffle; 14 Falter; 17 Discounteur; 20 Ennui; 21 Verbose; 22 Ordinary; 23 Grid; Down: 1 Pleasure; 4 Reach; 5 Reindeer; 6 Satisfactory; 6 Prowess; 7 Dismay; 8 Redirection; 12 Prospect; 14 Feigned; 16 Quiver; 18 Odour; 19 Zero.

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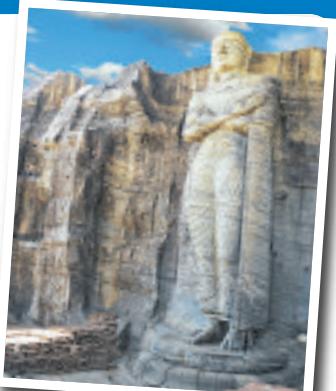
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Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO
HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Character home is part of renovated paper mill



The two/three-bedroomed house in Huccott village is on the market for £229,950

A CHARACTER property enjoying a stunning poolside location in Huccott village, near Kidderminster is for sale with a price tag of £229,950.

Thomas Blount Cottage comes with a reception hall and cloakroom, through lounge, lower ground floor hallway, dining room, L-shaped breakfast kitchen, two/three double bedrooms, house bathroom, gas central heating and part double glazing.

To the rear of the property and within the gated complex is a large pool with fishing rights surrounded by landscaped grounds and a car park for residents, with opposite another pool where locals fish or walk through the wood.

The cottage, formerly part of Kidderminster Paper Mill, was renovated into a range of

properties with the cottage having accommodation on three levels with reception hall with staircase to the first and ground floor level.

There is a cloakroom suite and spacious through lounge with the lower ground hallway leading to a dining room or third bedroom.

To the rear of the cottage is a 21ft L-shaped breakfast kitchen with a range of wall, drawer and base units, stainless steel sink drainer with mixer tap, space and plumbing for washing machine and tumble dryer.

Outside

On the first floor are two double bedrooms, with the bathroom having a panelled bath with shower over, wash hand basin and WC.

Outside to the rear the gardens have two large sheds and access to the grounds.

Allan Morris & Jones, 01562 747755.



Within the gated complex is a large pool with fishing rights and car park



The rear garden includes two large sheds and access to further grounds

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- Refurbished • EPC: C

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£450 pcm

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- Kitchen • Rear Garden
- Central heating • Double Glazing
- EPC: D

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THISTLE GREEN CLOSE, ROWLEY REGIS

£550 pcm

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- Guest W.C. • Refurbished
- EPC: C

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£475 pcm

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- Kitchen • Utility Area
- Rear Garden • EPC: D

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BEECHES ROAD, ROWLEY REGIS

£575 PCM

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- Refurbished • Modern

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GORSTY HILL ROAD, ROWLEY REGIS

£89,950

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- Fitted Kitchen • Central Heating
- EPC: D • NO CHAIN

SOLD

POWKE LANE, ROWLEY REGIS

£119,950

- THREE BEDROOMS • LOUNGE/DINER
- Fitted Kitchen • Conservatory
- Guest W.C. • Front Drive Way
- Garage • EPC: D
- No Chain

SOLD

PENNCRICKET LANE, ROWLEY REGIS

£99,950

- THREE BEDROOM • LOUNGE/DINER
- Fitted Kitchen • Utility Room
- Guest W.C. • Front Drive Way
- Garage • EPC: E

SOLD

HEATH STREET, ROWLEY REGIS

£129,950

- THREE BEDROOMS • LOUNGE
- Fitted Kitchen/Diner • Conservatory
- Mezzanine Dressing Room • En-Suite
- Guest W.C. • Off Road Parking
- EPC: C

SOLD

HEATH STREET, ROWLEY REGIS

£115,000

- TWO/THREE BEDROOMS • LOUNGE
- Fitted Kitchen • Off Road Parking
- GARAGE • REAR GARDEN
- Central Heating • NO CHAIN
- EPC: E

SOLD

BALMORAL WAY, ROWLEY REGIS

£139,950

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- Fitted Kitchen • Off Road Parking
- GARAGE • REAR GARDEN
- No Chain • EPC: C

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HALESOWEN, Bromsgrove Road

Located in the desirable area of Romsey. This unfurnished semi-detached house features gas central heating, modern and spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, conservatory, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, loft space, front & rear gardens, garage, fantastic views, inspection strongly recommended. EPC: E £875 PCM



BRIERLEY HILL, Golden Cross Way

A furnished detached house close to Brierley Hill Town Centre. It features a downstairs w.c., living/dining room, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, bathroom with en-suite shower room, house bathroom. Benefits also include gas central heating, front and rear gardens, garage. Convenient location for Merry Hill. Inspection strongly recommended. EPC: D £750 PCM



HALESOWEN, Jimara, Feldon Lane

Located in Halesowen/Blackheath. This extended traditional semi-detached house with plenty of space. Comprising of large living room, separate dining room, study, 2 double bedrooms, 1 large single bedroom, house bathroom with shower, galley kitchen with appliances, separate utility room, downstairs w.c. gas central heating, double glazing, large driveway for 3 cars. EPC: D £695 PCM



HALESOWEN, Shelton Lane

A fabulously spacious family home, set in an elevated position on a popular road. The property has been fully refurbished throughout, featuring a new kitchen with integrated appliances, 3 large bedrooms, new bathroom, and a good sized lounge diner with French doors leading to a patio and a garden set over different levels. A garage and driveway completes the home. EPC: E £650 PCM



HALESOWEN, Sanderson Place

Luxury living in Hayley Green. A superb ground floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner with fireplace, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. Available 28/07/13. EPC: B £650 PCM



HALESOWEN, Wroxley House

Luxury living in Hayley Green. This superb luxury 1st floor apartment offers spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner with fireplace, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B £625 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, Manson Drive

An attractive 3 bedroom end town house set in a cul de sac location which is within easy reach of Old Hill station and local shops. The accommodation includes reception hall, guest wc, fitted kitchen, lounge, 2 double bedrooms and bathroom on the 1st floor, master bedroom suite on the 2nd floor which offers a generous bedroom with dressing room/study off and en-suite shower room. Enclosed rear garden, garage, driveway to fire. EPC: C £595 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, Gooch Close

Well presented 3 bedroom refurbished semi-detached house in this quiet cul de sac. Featuring a large kitchen/dining room, spacious lounge with feature fireplace, patio doors leading to a south aspect covered terrace area. The garden is a selling feature with an abundance of exotic shrubs and fragrant climbers and trees. Guest cloakroom, family bathroom with shower over bath, 2 double & 1 large single bedroom. Driveway parking. Available now. EPC: D £595 PCM



HALESOWEN, Linden Avenue

Situated in a quiet cul de sac location. A spacious detached bungalow offering good sized accommodation having 2 reception rooms, open plan breakfast/kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom, good sized rear garden, garage/driveway parking. Available now. EPC: D £595 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, Prince Street

A beautiful semi-detached house close to Cradley Heath. Featuring 3 good size bedrooms, master with en-suite, modern bathroom with shower, modern kitchen, low maintenance garden, double glazing, gas central heating, downstairs WC, off road parking. EPC: C £575 PCM



HALESOWEN, Beaumont Road

A superb fully re-furbished traditional semi-detached house. Within easy reach of Blackheath and a short drive from Halesowen and the M5. This home features 2 large reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing. A must see property! EPC: D £550 PCM



HALESOWEN, Lodgefield Road

Available to rent is this lovely semi-detached house on a popular road. This home features 2 good size bedrooms, gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, conservatory, shower room, front & rear gardens, driveway parking, unfurnished. An opportunity not to be missed. EPC: D £525 PCM



HALESOWEN, Stewarts Road

A 2 bed unfurnished semi-detached house situated in a quiet location, and close to local bus routes and shops. Featuring a large dining lounge, fitted kitchen, guest w.c., 2 double bedrooms, family bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, driveway parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: C £525 PCM



NETHERTON, Quayside Walk

A fantastic 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment set in delightful gardens with superb views over the canal. The accommodation includes entrance hall, lounge with Juliet balcony, fitted kitchen with integrated oven and washer/dryer, 2 bedrooms, master bedroom with en-suite shower room and 2 double fitted maple effect wardrobes. further bathroom, double glazing, electric heating and allocated parking. EPC: D £525 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, Pennycricket Lane

An unfurnished semi-detached house, ideal for access to the M5 J2, and local shops features 3 bedrooms, lounge, large fitted kitchen/diner with separate shower cubicle. Benefits also include gas central heating, double glazing, driveway parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: D £525 PCM



HALESOWEN, Howley Grange Road

An unfurnished split level flat on a sought after road. Ideal for Howley Grange Primary School and for Birmingham. This property features a utility room, fitted kitchen, living room, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, on road parking. Benefits also include gas central heating, garden. EPC: B £495 PCM



HALESOWEN, Highfield Road

Deceptively large semi-detached house, close to local shops and buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Cradley Heath featuring 2 good sized lounges, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, nice size rear garden, on road parking. Available now. EPC: C £475 PCM



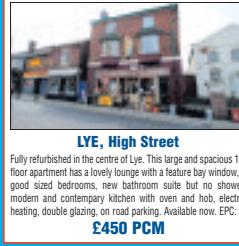
CRADLEY HEATH, Pear Tree Lane

Modern ground floor apartment. Situated on a popular development within walking distance of Old Hill train station and Old Hill shops, the property comprises 1 large double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen with smallridge, bathroom with shower, parking space, own rear garden, unfurnished. EPC: C £450 PCM



WORDSLEY, John Street

Close to local buses to Kingswinford, Stourbridge and a short walk from Ambleside. This 2 double bedroom terraced house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, on road parking and an enclosed rear garden. Available 05/08/13. EPC: E £450 PCM



LYE, High Street

Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This large and spacious 1st floor apartment has a lovely lounge with a feature bay window. 2 good sized bedrooms, new bathroom suite but no shower, modern and contemporary kitchen with oven and hob, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: C £450 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, Victoria Gardens

A modern top floor apartment, in the centre of Old Hill with local bus stop outside and Old Hill train station close by. This apartment comprises of 1 double bedroom, electric storage heating, double glazing, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, unfurnished. EPC: C £425 PCM

Property



The three-bedroomed house has been extended to the rear to create a separate dining room

Family three-bedroom house situated on the outskirts of a village



The rear garden is mainly laid to lawn with borders and paved areas

A MODERN three bedroom end town house on the edge of the village of Wombourne is on the market based on offers around £146,950.

The property in Foley Grove benefits from mainly double glazing and central heating and has been extended to the rear to create a separate dining room, and with a garage in a block at the rear.

On the ground floor the L-shaped lounge has a fireplace with inset fire and a sliding door to the kitchen with a range of base, drawer and wall units, space for washing machine and cooker with extractor hood over and stainless steel sink with mixer tap, with the dining room having patio doors to the garden.

Shower

On the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom with white suite of wash hand basin, WC and panelled bath with shower over.

Outside to the front is a path and lawned garden and to the rear a paved patio, lawn and borders. For further details call the agent Berriman Eaton on 01902 32636.



The extension to the back provides a separate dining area and there is a garage in a block to the rear of the house

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EPC D



Radbourne Drive, Halesowen

£240,000

This modern detached house situated at the head of a cul-de-sac with accommodation comprising lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility, WC, four bedrooms, en-suite to master, family bathroom, drive, garage, front and rear gardens. Halesowen



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over £85,000

Terraced two bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen, bathroom, front and rear gardens and parking.



EPC D

£85,000

Semi-detached three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge/diner, kitchen, front and rear garden and driveway.



New Price

EPC E

Offers Over £75,000

Semi-detached two bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, upstairs shower room, front and rear gardens and driveway.



EPC C

£180,000

This semi-detached house is situated in a popular residential area. Lounge, dining room, kitchen and three bedrooms. Halesowen.



Awaiting EPC

£95,000

Traditional end terraced property includes two reception rooms, kitchen, downstairs bathroom, two bedrooms, loft room and rear garden.



New Price

EPC C

Offers Over £80,000

Terraced two bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom, garden and garage. The property must be viewed to be appreciated.



EPC D

£65,000

Mid-terrace three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance lobby, lounge, dining room, kitchen, downstairs bathroom and rear garden.



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over £150,000

A traditional semi-detached house comprising lounge diner, three bedrooms and family bathroom. Halesowen.



EPC C

£70,000

Traditional end terraced house with lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms, off road parking and front and rear gardens. Halesowen.



NEW

EPC D

£79,950

Three bedroom mid-terrace property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, dining room, conservatory and bathroom.



EPC D

£64,950

Mid-terrace three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen, downstairs WC, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Motoring

Compiled by Motoring
Editor Sharon Walters

Carry on Clio with the new RS

By John Griffiths

IF cars were sold on their sound alone, I suspect the new Clio Renaultsport 200 would be roaring out of the showrooms as fast as they could make them.

There can't be many true petrolheads who won't feel their pulses quicken at the unexpectedly deep exhaust growl which follows a press of the start button.

It's a pleasing soundtrack on the road, too, particularly as you go down through the new six-speed semi-automatic gearbox, and the system automatically blips the throttle to match the road speed for a smoother change.

It's an added thrill for enthusiastic drivers who, let's face it, are the sort of people likely to buy a 200bhp, £18,995 'hot' hatchback.

But environmentalists and neighbours don't despair: from the outside the Clio RS's twin exhausts won't rattle your windows or set off every car alarm in the street.

What Renault has done is to install a 'sound pipe', a sort of ship's speaking tube, to carry the engine note to the cabin rather than the outside world.

In the days when even hot hatchbacks and GTs are generally more refined and quiet, it's a sort of a Proustian 'Madelaine Moment' of



The new Clio Renaultsport is lighter and turbocharging has boosted torque

sound, evocative of less politically correct times.

The new Renaultsport Clio 200 has dumped its predecessor's normally aspirated two litre engine for a 1.6 litre turbo. In the process it's gained more torque, more pace and more efficiency in terms of lower fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

It also has a new twin clutch six speed transmission, which operates as a fully automatic or a very fast manual with up/down paddles behind the wheel.

Its appearance comes hot on the heels of

another 1.6 turbo, the Fiesta ST, which is cheaper although a little behind on outright power and performance.

Clearly the latest RS is based on the new Clio with a similar trendy yet practical interior, with the added touch of funky colour contrasts (the yellow test car had red piping on black seats and red seat belts).

It has five doors, too, with the additional interior and boot space of its sibling Clio IVs compared to the previous generation cars.

While maintaining the 200bhp of the previous Renaultsport Clio, the new car is lighter

and turbocharging has boosted torque to an impressive 240Nm, from as low as 1,750rpm.

The result is a couple of tenths off the 0 to 62mph sprint time (now 6.7 seconds) while fuel consumption and emissions improve by a remarkable 24 per cent, to 44.6mpg and 144g/km.

That, of course, depends very much on how you drive it.

There are three operational modes beginning with 'normal' which gives a softer throttle response, lighter steering and early gearchanges from the automatic transmission.

Sport and Race modes progressively alter these settings to show more of the Renaultsport's true character: a conversation from Dr Jekyll to Mr Hyde.

Roadholding

The car has all the latest race-derived electronic wizardry to aid traction, roadholding and cornering, including oversteer and torque steer, once the twin demons of more powerful front wheel drive cars.

It also has bigger, more powerful brakes and a strengthened suspension system with more resistance to body roll.

The Renaultsport certainly doesn't demonstrate any sign of torque steer, which in previous generation pocket rockets could sometimes take you by surprise by veering sharply to the left under heavy acceleration.

It's impossible to assess the Renaultsport's full handling potential on public roads as most of the new systems such as the RS differential are

race and rally-bred – so for you and I it should have capability to spare. But there's one feature of the new suspension set-up that becomes obvious in the first mile and that's the big improvement in ride comfort: hot hatches don't have to rattle your teeth to be fun or competent.

It's a world first for Renault, the use of a hydraulic compression control developed for top class rallying in a production car.

It sounds complicated, but it's a secondary damping system which allows for less suspension rebound over bumps, while also reducing the extreme load variations on the tyres.

The 200 shares the standard hatchback's five star safety rating, and as well has the usual electronic systems such as ABS, traction and stability controls comes with six airbags and child seat fixings.

It's equipped with electric front windows, air conditioning, a seven-inch touch screen multi-media system including SatNav and hands-free communications, cruise control, adjustable speed limiter, multi-function trip computer, alloy wheels, split/fold rear seats, plus electrically heated and adjustable mirrors.

Outside, the car is distinguished by its unique 17-inch alloys, and a bodykit which includes body-coloured bumpers with an F1-style blade at the front, diffuser at the rear, aerodynamic side skirts and a rear spoiler.

Renault has a long history of motor sport success and of producing exciting 'hot' road cars and with its new 200 has taken an evolutionary step forward.

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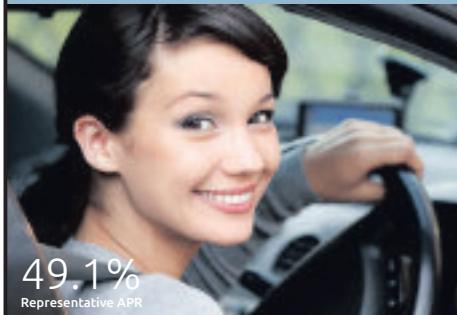
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Motoring

Summer's here and time is right for big savings on MG



Make a fashion statement with the MG6 GT and save more than £2,400 with the zero per cent VAT offer

MG has launched a zero per cent VAT offer across the entire MG6 range, resulting in big cash savings for customers with no hidden catches.

The MG zero per cent VAT – No Exclusions deal is being offered throughout July and August giving customers some hot summer savings of up to £3,601.

From today an award-winning MG6 GT petrol model in S trim, which had a recommended on-the-road price of

£15,455.00, will cost just £12,968.58 – a saving of £2,486.42.

The top-of-the-range petrol model MG6 Magnette, which had a recommended on-the-road price of £20,350, will now cost £16,981.92 – a saving of £3,368.08.

On DTi-TECH diesel models the cash savings are even greater. The MG6 DTi-TECH GT in S trim had a recommended on-the-road price of £16,995.

It will now cost £13,808.58 – a saving of £3,186.42.

The top-of-the-range MG6 DTi-

TECH Magnette, including metallic paint, offers a saving of £3,601.42. The effective price of the car is reduced from £21,590 to £17,988.58.

Guy Jones, MG's Sales & Marketing Director, said: "This is a great offer and, unlike some Zero VAT promotions, there are no exclusions or hidden catches with our offer."

"Our dealers will also be able to give customers some very competitive finance deals, so together with the great value-for-money package that the MG6 range already has, this really is a sizzling summer offer."



MG.CO.UK/OFFERS



Motoring

This red hot Vulcano will cost a cool £3m



The ultra-exclusive Vulcano, a one-off supercar with a one-off price of £3million makes its UK debut in September

A ONE-off supercar with a £3 million price tag is to make its UK debut in September.

The Vulcano, made by tiny and extremely niche manufacturer Icona, uses an advanced V12 petrol engine with an electric hybrid system to produce as much as 950 horsepower.

Icona claims a top speed of around 216mph for the car, which will go on show at the Salon Prive show within a

'concepts and prototypes' display. Another staggering performance figure for the Vulcano is its sub-nine seconds 0-120mph time, making it faster to that speed than most family hatchbacks are to 60mph.

Exclusive

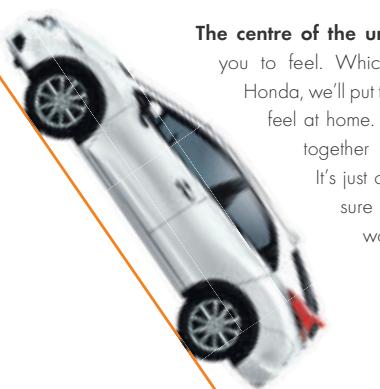
With the chief engineer a certain Claudio Lombardi, formerly of Ferrari, the Vulcano offers a chance to own an ultra-exclusive and incredibly high

performance supercar. Sales Director, David Bagley commented: "Icona is a very exciting new brand and we are delighted that it has chosen Salon Prive for the UK debut of the Vulcano.

"It's a beautiful car and it is going to look fantastic within the Concepts & Prototypes Display."

Tickets for the Salon Prive show can be purchased at www.salonprivelondon.com or by calling 0808 100 2205.

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Fuel consumption figures for the Civic range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 32.5 - 70.6 (8.7 - 4.0), Extra Urban 54.3 - 85.6 (5.2 - 3.3), Combined 44.1 - 78.5 (6.4 - 3.6). CO₂ emissions: 150 - 94g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

Model shown: Civic 1.4-i-VTEC SE Manual in optional White Orchid Pearl at £1,495 On The Road. **Terms and Conditions:** New retail Civic 1.4-i-VTEC SE Manual in metallic/pearl paint at £17,495 total cash price (and total amount payable) with 36 months' 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £3,909.22 (22%) deposit. Optional Final Payment of £2,421.10 due at 36 months. Total amount payable £20,816. You must have a good driving record and be aged 18 or over. Subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. **Servicing:** Four years' servicing or 50,000 miles, whichever comes first, for £399 including VAT and includes a maximum of four manufacturer's scheduled services.

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Fuel consumption figures for the CR-V range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 28.0 - 43.5 (10.1 - 6.5), Extra Urban 43.5 - 55.4 (6.5 - 5.1), Combined 36.7 - 50.4 (7.7 - 5.6). CO₂ emissions: 180 - 149g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results.

Model shown: CR-V 2.0-i-VTEC 2WD Manual in optional Passion Red Pearl at £22,005 On The Road. **Terms and Conditions:** New retail CR-V 2.0-i-VTEC 2WD Manual in metallic/pearl paint at £22,005 total cash price (and total amount payable) with 36 months' 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £5,673.81 (26%) deposit. Optional Final Payment of £11,673.81 due at 36 months. Total amount payable £38,673.81. You must have a good driving record and be aged 18 or over. Subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. **Servicing:** Four years' servicing or 50,000 miles, whichever comes first, for £399 including VAT and includes a maximum of four manufacturer's scheduled services.

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Big home win keeps side in the top three

Warwick & Worcester
Premier Division 1
The George 251
NIFO 127

The first team had a big home win against NIFO, dropping only one shot in the match to remain third in the league.

The match was almost over as a contest after the opening four put on 52 shots with wins by Elliot McGuinness (21-1), Pete Davenport (21-7), Paddy McGuinness (21-10) and Alan Belcher (21-14).

The middle four hampered home the advantage and the back four completed the rout.

South Staffs
Premier Division
Dudley Dell 234
The George 175

The second team put up an improved performance at Dudley Dell having four winners in the match.

The George had wins by Ray Broadfield (21-15) and Jan Pratley (21-18) in the 1st four and trailed by 19 shots. Dudley Dell were 38 shots up after the middle four finally winning the match by 59 shots.

Warks & Worcs Alliance
Division 3
Bradford Arms 219
The George 205

The third team suffered only their second defeat of the season at Bradford Arms but still stay top of the league.

Bradford Arms led by 5 shots after the 1st four, John Deakin (21-7) winning for The George.

Brace sees off Swindon

A LEE NOVAK brace helped Birmingham see off Swindon Town 3-0 at the County Ground.

The summer signing struck in the 40th and 58th minutes before birthday boy Andrew Shinnie sealed the win.

Blues coasted against a Swindon team managed by former Birmingham midfielder Mark Cooper following the departure of Kevin MacDonald.

Five minutes before the break, Chris Burke set up Novak from six yards.

The ex-Huddersfield Town man's second was even more impressive. Koby Arthur found Shinnie whose perfect through-ball fell into the path of Mitch Hancock and he teed up Novak to slide in from yards out.

Bulldog spirit as late penalty seals deal

Birmingham Bulldogs 30
Coventry Dragons 24

BIRMINGHAM Bulldogs' Rugby League FC's top-of-the-table clash with league leaders Coventry Dragons did not take place in the 100-degree heatwave that had been forecast – or feared.

But it was hot enough, weather-wise and gamewise as the two sides went at it hammer and tongs from first to last. Only a late penalty goal made the game safe for Brum.

Bulldogs got just the start they wanted when full back and skipper Matt Dudley rose high above the Dragons defence to claim the ball

from an up-and-under to touch down by the posts. Half back Sam Edgar added the goal.

The hosts defended well, but a penalty for ball stealing gave Coventry position from which stand off Adie Iliff went over for a try goaled by left-winger Cameron Tunge.

Birmingham then had more defending to do, but some resolute tackling and a fine catch by Farnham denied the visitors.

Bulldogs were defending again when stand off Andrew "Beefy" Burton intercepted and scooted some 60 metres to the posts for a

Rugby League

try that Edgar goaled. Back came Dragons: from a scrum, centre Phil Molloy crossed wide out; but Birmingham responded just before the break as Burton finished off a great break by Olli Sankey to dive over from acting half back for his second try. Half time:

Birmingham 16 Coventry 10

At the start of the second half, Bulldogs resumed where they had left off at the end of the first as Burton stepped his way through a rather static Dragons defence for

his hat-trick try. Edgar goaled to give Brum a 12-point lead.

It was not to last: tries from full back Kelvin Devoisey, right winger Carl Liddington, this one well goaled by Tunge, and industrious second rower Dave Whiting put the visitors ahead 24-22.

Bulldogs went back on attack, and once again it was a kick that unlocked the visitors' defence, and once more it was Dudley who claimed it, touching down for a try that Edgar goaled to restore the home lead to 28-24.

Edgar was certain he had scored a try, but he had just been forced

into touch. However, a penalty to Bulldogs some 30 metres out was goaled by Edgar to stretch the lead to a crucial six points.

Brum still had some defending to do, but they managed to hold out for the remaining minutes to record a memorable win that leaves Bulldogs in third place in the league table.

Glen Farnham, a handful for the visitors defence all match, just pipped Burton and Edwards for Bulldogs' man of the match.

Bulldogs next fixture is away to Nottingham Outlaws A next Saturday July 27 at 2.30pm.

Blackbird on song to take Hammer

DUDLEY finally provided a home winner in the Golden Hammer as Lewis Blackbird held his nerve to take a memorable win in the prestigious event.

The in-form 26-year-old put in a classy display to become the first Heathens rider since Billy Hamill in 1996 to lift the trophy.

And American legend Hamill handed over the prize, having attended the meeting as guest of honour.

Hamill, in the country as manager of the United States team in the World Cup, received a rapturous reception from the fans.

Blackbird was ecstatic as he joined some of speedway's biggest names as a Golden Hammer winner.

He came out on top of a Monmore Green field that included Heathens team mates Paul Starke and Ashley Morris.

"I'm absolutely over the moon – it was great to win that," he said. "It's a nice one to win for the fans."

Blackbird kicked off his evening in fine style with a win followed by a second then back-to-back victories.

In the final round of the heats he was neck and neck with 2012 champion Kyle Newman on 11 points.

He was unable to take victory in his final outing and Blackbird, after a nervous wait due to a tapes malfunction, took the chequered flag.

A winning draw for Smethwick

IN Division One of the Birmingham Cricket League, Smethwick (178) had a winning draw against Barnards Green (155-9). Kuldipe Diwan hit 56 for Smethwick, then took 4-38.

Brewed made visitors Old Hill work hard for their five-wicket victory. Bruce Thomason hit an unbeaten 137 and skipper Cameron Fox hit 52 as Brewed piled up 269-4. But Old Hill, led by 109 from Nitesh Patel with 46 each from Mike Hingley and Danny Cox and 26 by Jared Daniels got there with a ball to spare.

Halesowen (157) lost by four wickets to Division Two leaders Old Elizabeths. Mahroof Azam took 4-49 for Halesowen. Stourbridge had a winning draw at Stratford.

Wolves' opening squad close to being formed

KENNY JACKETT reckons he's "pretty close" to naming his Wolves team for the new season opener against Preston – but Jake Cassidy may have given him food for thought.

The head coach used the stiffest test so far this pre-season to give some much-needed game-time to those expected to be on the fringes of his first-choice line-up.

George Elokobi, Tongo Dombria, Zeli Ismail and Cassidy all got chance to step up their match practice with starts at Oakwell. But it was the latter who impressed the most and suggested he could yet crash the starting line-up at Deepdale.

Cassidy set up Ismail's second-minute opener and caught the eye with his most convincing display yet.

"You'd look at Cassidy's performance and say it was a positive one," said Jackett.

"I wouldn't say there was a way to go in my team selection – I'm pretty close to it."

"There were bits and pieces from many different people – we look to have a good centre-back pairing in Danny Bath and Richard Stearman and we scored a goal from a set-piece. I felt we did OK, but there's a lot of improvement to come."

"We produced some good goals and a competitive performance but we have a new group and new combinations. I felt, when we went to 4-3-3 in the second half, we kept the ball better. But we can put our key players to better use in better areas."

Jackett wants sharper movement and more creativity from the team.

"We got in good positions but we should have been more constructive in possession and some sloppy passes

Wolves

put us on the back foot and made Barnsley attack," he added.

"We can improve our possession, and on our actual work to get on the ball and work the ball out."

During the match Ismail stabbed home after coming in off the left to make an intelligent run to meet Cassidy's low cross after a throw from Sam Ricketts.

Barnsley were level three minutes later when Jacob Mellis wrong-footed Wayne Hennessey with a low drive from outside the area after Chris O'Grady held up play.

Wolves regained the lead in the 20th minute with another set-piece goal set up by Ricketts, when his superb curling free kick was glanced home by Bath.

That signalled the start of the visitors' best period of the game and Cassidy hit the post on the half hour.

Barnsley started the second half on top and David Perkins volleyed over before O'Grady scored a deserved equaliser in the 58th minute.

It follows his success in the

Golfer Ryan's Open to joining pro ranks



Golfer Ryan Cornfield, aged 19, from Lower Gornal who has just won his first golf competition on tour

RYAN CORNFIELD maybe watching the likes of Lee Westwood and Tiger Woods from the seat of his armchair this month, but next year the 19-year-old hopes to be playing among them.

The teenager from Lower Gornal narrowly missed out on qualifying for this year's Open Championship at Muirfield, but he has ambitions to make next year's cut.

His hopes have been boosted by winning his first adult championship – the Tillman Trophy – in Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset.

It follows his success in the

Staffordshire Boys Open and Staffordshire Boys Amateur Championship in 2011.

He also won the West Midlands British Colleges Championship in the same year.

Disappointing

Cornfield, who has a handicap of -3, said: "It was pretty disappointing to miss out on qualifying for the Open. But I'm forever improving and I aim to get better and return next year to qualify, or get into the USA Open."

The competition in Somerset last

month followed Cornfield's first year of a golfing scholarship at the University of South Carolina.

The former Ellowes Secondary School and King Edward VI College student aims to become a professional after finishing his four-year course.

His father Philip, 46, a production manager at Land Rover, said: "We are immensely proud of what Ryan has achieved."

Ryan first started playing golf as a 11-year-old at Himley Golf Club, later playing at Swindon Golf Club and now Envile Golf Club.

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Women kick off campaign with 11

Halesowen 11
Atherstone 0

Premiership Atherstone travelled to Halesowen as the Yeltz ladies started their pre-season campaign,

Due to winning the league last season, morale was high and all players were looking forward to playing a good premiership side.

This should have been a tough game but Halesowen didn't read the script and pressed the visitors from the off.

Within five minutes Halesowen had taken the lead with a low drive by Sian Whithall.

Rachel Letford then scored four goals within 33 minutes. New signing Haley Chatters made it six just before half time.

Lyndsey Glover scored a second half hat-trick and then Letford and Chatters also added to their tallies late on in the game.

Manager Scott McKee said "The football from the players was exceptional and the set pieces worked well."

"This has been our second friendly and this is the benchmark, how I expect every performance to be."

"An impressive display from defence, midfield and attack, I see no reason why we won't win the league," added McKee.

Violent end to friendly

Tipton 5 Pelsall Villa 3 (match abandoned)

THE latest step in Tipton Town's pre-season campaign ended in chaos as a friendly with Pelsall Villa was abandoned.

The match ended after 72 minutes following violence involving Pelsall's captain Ashley Bellingham.

At the time of the abandonment, Tipton were leading 5-3, having raced into a 3-1 lead at half time.

Two first half goals from Mark Swann and a penalty from Danny Ashton gave Tipton the advantage before a Pelsall goal from the spot reduced the arrears.

In the second half, a Ricky Nicholls 30-yarder and another spot-kick from Ashton put the home side 5-1 up.

With both sides making changes Pelsall began an impressive looking fight back with goals from Daniel Battison and dragging the score back to 5-3.

Play-off race still on despite Clegg injury

Speedway

HEATHENS chairman Nigel Pearson is backing Dudley to stay in the play-off race in the absence of big-scoring reserve Max Clegg.

He crashed in a junior meeting at Redcar last week and suffered a fractured left ankle which could keep him out for up to two months. He is due to see a specialist this week when he should get a clearer indication about the length of time his recovery will take. Heathens are set to use a guest rider to replace him in next Tuesday's home meeting with Kent at Wolverhampton when they are looking for more valuable National League points.

Pearson said: "It's a blow for Max and we wish him well for a speedy recovery. The timing could hardly be any worse because one more meeting and he would have got a new average which would see him in the main body of the team and we could use the rider replacement facility for him."

"But right now we have to look at using a three-point unattached rider to replace him and that weakens us significantly."

"It also means there will be a bit more pressure on our second string riders Dan

Greenwood and Gareth Isherwood to do the business. But I had a chat with our manager, Will Pottinger, over the weekend and we have agreed the priority is for us to win our home meetings, if we can do that then there is every chance we will reach the play-offs."

"We're also confident of picking up some points on the road so we still feel we can do it and hopefully Max will be fit for the most important time of the season."

"He's been great for us so far this year and there is no way we will consider signing a replacement as long as there is every chance he will be back in a few weeks."

"All our new signings have done a great

job this season and this is a big blow to young Max."

Tickets are still on sale for the Cradley 83 celebration night at Cradley Heath Liberal Club on August 23.

The Heathens team of 1983 won the British League title with just two league defeats and they also lifted the Knockout Cup. The club have organised a 30th anniversary evening with riders Jan O. Pedersen and Alan Grahame and manager Peter Adams.

Tickets priced £10 are available from the track shop next Tuesday or the club's official website www.dudleyheathens.co

Reid: My future is at Albion

STEVEN Reid turned down big money this summer to stay at Albion.

But there were times when the Baggies defender wondered whether he would still be playing at all.

The experienced full-back ended a summer of speculation over his future by signing on at The Hawthorns for another season.

Reid admits he almost quit Albion for more lucrative deals elsewhere. But in the end, the chance to stay in the Premier League was too good to reject.

"I was close to going elsewhere but it was about staying in the Premier League," said the former Ireland international.

"There were better financial offers on the table elsewhere. But, when you weigh it all up, it's the Premier League you want to be playing in."

Once more, injuries left the 32-year-old in limbo in the loose season.

A hamstring problem followed by a freak leg fracture prevented him playing the number of games last season that would have triggered an automatic contract extension. That meant weeks of negotiations over a new one-year deal.

Striker Griffiths keeps his place

WOLVES striker Leigh Griffiths today retained his place in Scotland's squad to face England at Wembley on August 14.

The 22-year-old, who made his first start in Scotland's 1-0 win against Croatia last time out, joins Albion duo James Morrison and Graham Dorrans, Villa's Alan Hutton and Barry Bannan plus Birmingham winger Chris Burke.

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Jordanne makes history in the mixed doubles



Great Britain's Jordanne Whiley in action with her partner Marc McCarroll in the Mixed Doubles Final against David Phillipson and Louise Hunt in the British Open Wheelchair Tennis Championships

BLACK Country tennis player Jordanne Whiley made up for women's doubles disappointment at the British Wheelchair Tennis Open by powering to a historic mixed doubles title in Nottingham with partner Marc McCarroll.

The pair's clash with fellow Brits David Phillipson and Louise Hunt was moved indoors because of inclement weather but they powered to a confident 6-2, 6-1 victory.

It was the inaugural mixed doubles competition to be played at the Nottingham event and Whiley, of Halesowen, admits she was pleased the pair were able to add their names to the history books.

"It's been a great experience to get together and play some mixed doubles

and very enjoyable," she said. "It's been played at some other Super Series events that we've not been at together, so it's fantastic to get the chance."

"We've had a great time. It's been a lot of fun and after getting knocked out in the singles earlier in the week it's lovely to finish out home Super Series on a high."

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